MARVEL
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EDITORIAL

It was amazing to behold.

Alex Ross had sent me the original character illustrations — Iron Man, Black Panther, The Thing, and others — he had done before the proposal for **MARVELS** was even submitted. We're going to print some of these illustrations in **MARVEL AGE** over the next four months, even as we serialize Alex's "Human Torch" origin. Since the art is full color and somewhat fragile I asked Joe Caponsacco, one of our designers, to send it out to have photos shot, which we will use for our purposes.

The art was remarkable, but that's not the "amazing" thing I'm referring to.

The amazing thing was that, having dropped the art off in the Bullpen, I went back a few minutes later only to find a crowd of Bullpenners gathered around Joe's desk, where they were eagerly and intently studying every last detail of Alex's work — in essence his *sketches*.

This may be the most enthusiastic endorsement an artist can possibly receive. After all, hundreds of pages of extraordinary artwork make their way through the Bullpen every day, work by Andy Kubert and Mark Bagley and George Perez, to name but a few. After a while, the folks in the Bullpen have to become acclimated — *jaded*, if you will — to seeing terrific artwork. They would be exhausted beyond belief if they got excited at *every* page.

Yet Alex's work had these people shouting to each other, "Come over here; you've got to see this stuff," and, "This is my favorite piece. I just love the way he does Sentinels," and so on. And you should see what it's like when the actual pages of **MARVELS** come out of Marc McLaurin's office. It's a wonder *anything* gets done in the Bullpen on those days!

Actually, I shouldn't find it amazing at all. I'm at least as guilty as the rest; when I have a visitor up here at the offices, I inevitably take them into Marc's offices, saying, "You've got to see this stuff." It's lucky for me that Marc's a friend, or he'd have kicked me out the window a long time ago. A guy's gotta get some work done *sometime*.

So we're carrying it one step further. This month and for the next four it's my privilege to take *you* to Marc's office, and to Alex's studio, and to Kurt's office, to show you some of the most extraordinary work I've seen in comics.

You've got to see this stuff.

—Steve Saffel

I'm going to make up for a small *faux pas*. A couple of months ago, Michael Kraiger moved over to Richard Ashford's office to join the Marvel editorial ranks (good luck to you, Mike!), and Jim Hoston joined the **MARVEL AGE** design team. Jim's first issue was #127, and thanks to him the standard we've set for our magazine didn't slip in the slightest. So I want to take this moment to welcome Jim aboard. Expect to see a lot of great stuff from him.

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Up Front

NEW ARTIST FOR DEATH'S HEAD

Marvel UK announced that Salvador Larroca will join its popular **DEATH'S HEAD II** series as penciler, beginning in issue #12, arriving in stores in September. Born in Valencia, Spain, in 1964, Salvador has been drawing since he can remember, copying the work of professional artists as a child. "I'm self taught," he said, "and, for that reason, I have a lot of influences." Salvador's love for the comics medium goes back almost as far as his first drawing. "The first comic I bought was a Marvel; Iron Man vs. Mandarin."

Sometime later, the artist entered a competition for would-be comics pencilers and came in third, which led to recognition by a local television station. Any doubts he harbored about his talent disappeared. "[The award] cheered me," Salvador said. "I decided to take my drawing seriously."

The fledgling penciler embarked on a stint as a cartographer to pay the bills, while drawing comics remained a hobby. He sent his renderings of Marvel heroes to *Comics Forum*, the publisher of Marvel Comics in Spain, and was promptly hired to draw posters and book covers. Salvador didn't know it at the time, but he was on the verge of joining the ranks of his idols, John Byrne, Jim Lee, and Alan Davis.

It wasn't long before Marvel UK gave him a ring. As soon as he got the call, Larroca left his job in cartography and began a full-time career as a comic book artist. "My hobby is my work now," he says proudly.

Larroca has *also* taken the artistic reins of **DARK ANGEL** since issue #11.

WOLVERINE: GLOBAL JEOPARDY

Peter David and Richard Howell are teaming up to give endangered species a hand in **WOLVERINE: GLOBAL JEOPARDY**, a one-shot comic produced in cooperation with World Wildlife Fund. Ten percent of the comic's cover price will be donated to WWF for each copy sold.

In keeping with the spirit of environmentalism, **WOLVERINE: GLOBAL JEOPARDY** will be printed on recycled, coated paper and will feature an embossed cover of heavier recycled stock.

At thirty two pages, the book contains a 16-page story pitting Wolverine against Namor, Ka-Zar, and Shanna, before he joins them in fighting pollution, animal poaching, and and an overly zealous environmentalist known as the Conservator. The book's other 16 pages will alternate with the story, reprinting pictures of endangered species photographed by world renowned wildlife photographer Gerry Ellis. The photos will be accompanied by text informing readers about the species and their plights. **WOLVERINE: GLOBAL JEOPARDY** will be dedicated to the memory of Carol Kalish, Marvel's late Vice President of Product Development.

Stark Drama

Tony Stark is back and ready for action in Iron Man's big 300th issue, which arrives in stores in November. The 64-page issue features a red and gold foil cover introducing Tony's new armor, and wraps up a storyline begun in issue #298 which deals with the resurrection of Ultimo, one of Iron Man's most powerful foes.

Ultimo makes his way back into Iron Man's life when Earth Mover rises from the Earth, unwittingly bringing a more powerful than ever villain with him. Ultimo will be revamped, sporting an entirely new appearance. A more detailed origin will be established for the character, who is slated to become Iron Man's deadliest enemy yet. Earth Mover will join Tony in a deadly battle with the villain. At first, Iron Man will send his armor to do the dirty work for him via remote control. While he'll eventually wear the new armor himself, he'll discover that he's in no shape to defeat Ultimo in his still-weakened condition.

According to Iron Man Editor Nel Yomtov, the ever-resourceful Stark will call in some supporting players from the book's distant past to give him a hand. The likes of Happy Hogan and Michael O'Brien will return to reinforce Tony's war against Ultimo by slipping into the various armors of Iron Man's career. "[Iron Man #300] is like the bible for Iron Man and Tony Stark. Penciling it is going to get real hairy for our artists, but we've been planning this for six or eight months," Yomtov revealed. When asked if Iron Man's original gray, clunky armor from 1963 would make an appearance, Yomtov laughed. "Yeah, probably," he said. That was the best." According to the editor, long-time readers remember that particular costume affectionately. "Things were so innocent then."

War Machine will join the fray, as well, and the storyline in Iron Man #298-300 will lead directly into events in the premiere of James Rhodes' own series, **WAR MACHINE**, scheduled to premiere in 1994.

Macabre Secrets

To help kick off the Midnight Sons 12-part crossover, "The Siege of Darkness," the **GHOST RIDER AND THE MIDNIGHT SONS MAGAZINE**, a **MARVEL AGE** special, will arrive in stores in October. Sporting a cover by George Pratt, known for his work on DC's *Enemy Ace*, the magazine will reveal all about the Midnight Sons' pasts, presents, and futures in a series of incisive articles.

GHOST RIDER AND THE MIDNIGHT SONS MAGAZINE will include character histories of Ghost Rider, Morbius, and the rest of the macabre cast; an essay on Dr. Strange by his new scribe, David Quinn; a guide to the Midnight Sons universe; a hierarchy of the demons in the Marvel Universe; a sneak peek at the ramifications of the "Siege of Darkness" on the individual Midnight Sons and their books; a look back at the frightful creatures of Marvel's past; and more.

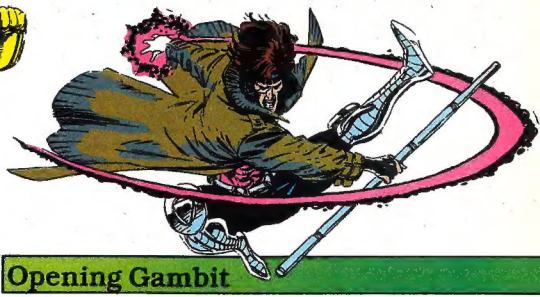
The book is offered as a resource to both long-time fans and newer readers who are interested in the histories of the characters who inhabit the dark side of the Marvel Universe.

Camelot Revisited

Starting in October, Marvel will combine the swashbuckling drama of ancient legend with the excitement of modern-day football in King Arthur and the Knights of Justice, a comic based on the popular syndicated Dutch TV cartoon series. According to writer Mike **(PUNISHER BACK TO SCHOOL SPECIAL)** Lackey, "These guys from Holland came up with this terrific idea for the cartoon, and we thought it would work really well here."

A three-issue limited series, **KING ARTHUR** finds a group of football heroes sent back in time to help Merlin the Magician save Arthur and his queen, Guinevere, from Arthur's wicked half-sister, Morgana.

In addition to Lackey, the book's creative team includes penciler Keith Wilson, whose work currently appears in DC's **SCARLET** and inker Marie Severin, who is famed for her work on the **INCREDIBLE HULK** and the Spider-Man Annuals. The series' three covers will be penciled by Michael Golden and will fit together to form a single poster.



Opening Gambit

Gambit, the X-Men's card-carrying mutant and co-star of **FOX-TV's** highly-rated Saturday morning cartoon, is the subject of a 4-issue limited series, scheduled to premiere in October.

Set in New Orleans, the story opens as the hero returns to his hometown with his girlfriend and teammate, Rogue, and discovers the true fate of his wife, Bella Donna, who has been presumed dead. In addition to introducing the Tithe Collector, a new villain, the book will find Gambit joining forces with the Assassins to stop Jean-Luc, his surrogate father, from completing a sinister ritual.

Written by Howard **(GHOST RIDER, SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE)** Mackie, **GAMBIT** will be penciled by Lee Weeks, who is known for his work on **DAREDEVIL**. Klaus **(SPIDER-MAN, PUNISHER)** Janson will ink the series.

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Yo! Pump Up the Comic!

Rap and Art unite to create the first sonic comic

"You gotta' wake up and learn some facts,
You're much greater than you think bein' black!
Mental health, inner self,
I'm a giant not an elf.
Correcting yourself is only done by yourself.
It's up to you to find the real you.
Your original culture, the original you"

Is this rap by **KRS-One** from his new video on *Yo! MTV Raps?* No, it's from **BREAK THE CHAIN**, a project that combines the excitement of a comic book with the energy of a rap tape available *only* with the comic.

Unleashed in October, **BREAK THE CHAIN** unites the talents of Boogie Down Productions rapper **KRS-One**, producer Marshall Chess, and artist Kyle Baker. By mixing music and humor with a positive message, the creators hope to both educate and entertain via Marvel's first Sonic Comic.

The three songs by KRS-One. . .were recorded exclusively for BREAK THE CHAIN and will not appear on any other album.

BREAK THE CHAIN will feature 32 pages of Kyle Baker's storytelling printed on glossy "Venom" stock (named after the paper used for the first **VENOM** limited series). Polybagged with this special edition will be an audio cassette featuring 52 layers of sound effects, dialogue, and songs which form the audio portion of the project. Readers, following along as the actors talk, laugh, and sing, will be signaled to turn the page when they hear "Word!"

The three songs by **KRS-One**: "Who Am I?," "Break the Chain," and "So Much Greater," were recorded exclusively for **BREAK THE CHAIN** and will not appear on any other album.

Editor Mort Todd pointed out that, in addition to the exclusive songs and Baker's art, the book's story — a collaboration by Baker, Chess, and **KRS-One** — is central to the project's purpose. Set in the inner city, the story revolves around three street kids, Bo, Malcolm, and Minasha, and their friend, a tough rapper named Wyze.

BREAK THE CHAIN creators (left to right) KRS-One, Marshall Chess, and Kyle Baker at the taping of the soundtrack. Photograph by Marti Wilkerson.

Wyze, whose songs stress self-pride, is outraged by the attitudes of his friends and their superficial knowledge of their African-American culture. Bo, the youngest of the group, has a Malcolm X hat and shirt, but does not know who the civil rights advocate really was. He represents youths who have reduced the message of the controversial leader into a fashion fad in the wave of "X" fever that swept the country following Spike Lee's movie.

Likewise, his friend Malcolm can spout his namesake's sound bites like, "By any means necessary," but feigns ignorance when Wyze challenges him to tell the complete story of the slain leader. By the end of the comic, readers discover that Malcolm, like many youths, hides his *true* intelligence because he doesn't want to be laughed at.

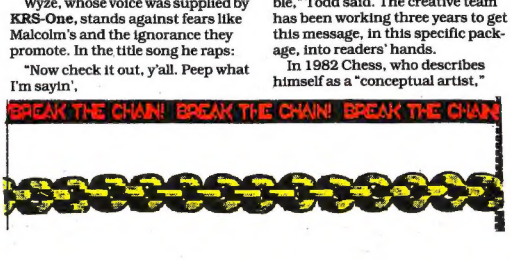
Wyze, whose voice was supplied by **KRS-One**, stands against fears like Malcolm's and the ignorance they promote. In the title song he raps:

"Now check it out, y'all. Peep what I'm sayin',
And train your brain to obtain your identity
From the enemy, which is ignorance!
The one that kills your common sense!
And takes away your self-respect,
And makes poverty what you expect.
This is the underground way to put knowledge in your brain,
But first we gotta' break the chain!"

Wyze believes that African-American children have transferred the chains of slavery from their feet to their minds, shackling themselves to a life of illiteracy, low expectations, and wasted potential. Wyze wants to shatter those imaginary chains by promoting pride and a hunger for knowledge.

Although the story involves minority children, the creators believe its message transcends race or age. "It's about self-empowerment and self worth, about knowing you're an individual and that anything is possible," Todd said. The creative team has been working three years to get this message, in this specific package, into readers' hands.

In 1982 Chess, who describes himself as a "conceptual artist,"



began working with minority musicians doing commercial rap at Sugarhill Records in Englewood, NJ, where he was confronted with the problems of children currently growing up in the city. "I was amazed by the downward slide of consciousness among black kids. I started thinking of ways we could help raise their low self-esteem," Chess explained.

By chance, Chess came upon the idea of combining a comic book with music. "I was driving in my car and watching my three year old daughter in the back seat with one of those book and tapes — you know, the ones that go, 'Turn the page when the monkey goes 'ooh-ooh.'' And she was really into it. So I wanted to

If anything, it's a new form. It's a soundtrack.

make a book and tape aimed at young black kids. Then I got the idea of tying it in with a rap star." Chess wrote a story called "Jomo and the Magic Drums" and, after his lawyer suggested that **KRS-One** might be interested in a venture such as this, contacted the rapper.

When Chess asked **KRS-One** to work on a project that involved comic books, the Jive Records star jumped at the opportunity. "I used to be a big comic book fan. When I was a kid, I used to collect Marvel and DC," **KRS-One** remembered. "My brother and I used to dream of getting things like HULK #1 through 6."

KRS-One has a history of producing positive, intelligent rap that often appears in unusual forms. In 1989, he joined with other rappers to denounce gang violence with the "Stop the Violence" video. The 1991 hit "Radio Song" that he recorded with **R.E.M.** on *Out of Time* bridged the realms of rap and alternative rock. "I'm known for projects such as this," he noted. "I only sign my name to legitimate things, so hopefully kids will see my name on this and say, 'Let me check it out.'"

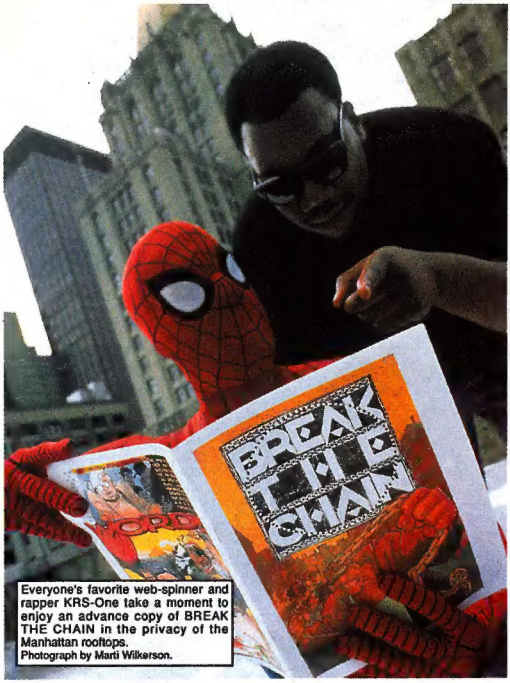
KRS-One liked the idea, feeling the language in Chess's tale was outdated, suggested they write a new one. **KRS-One** stressed that, in order for the project's content to be as cutting edge as its format, authenticity was essential. They wanted to avoid artificial dialogue and stereotyped situations. "Although we are ahead of our time, we wanted to be 'on time,' not behind, with this. We wanted to be real as to what's going on with kids. You wouldn't expect a company like Marvel to produce a book like this. This is a story line

...FREDRICK DOUGLASS...
YEAH!
...NAT TURNER...
I KNOW NAT TURNER, USED TO WORK OVER AT THE FISH PLACE TWO BLOCKS OVER, RIGHT?
AW, C'MON MAN--
HA HA/HA/ HA!
KNOWING YOUR CULTURE IS NOT ABOUT KNOWING A FEW NAMES OF A FEW BLACK PEOPLE, IT'S ABOUT KNOWING THE TRUTH ABOUT WHERE YOU COME FROM AND WHO YOU ARE!

kids can deal with — it's reality, no bull," he commented.

After a new story was written, they contacted Kyle Baker, who was immediately interested in the project. Baker said **BREAK THE CHAIN** was an attractive opportunity because he admired the music of **KRS-One**, and because, he said, "It seemed like fun. It's like a Disney movie; it's full of jokes, dancing, and singing — things that are always big sellers."

Chess and **KRS-One** felt that Baker, known for his quirky art featured in such books as *Why I Hate Saturn* was the perfect artist for the book. Chess felt it was important to use minority artists on a project featuring minority characters.



Everyone's favorite web-spinner and rapper KRS-One take a moment to enjoy an advance copy of BREAK THE CHAIN in the privacy of the Manhattan rooftops.
Photograph by Marti Wilkerson.

Chess and **KRS-One** also knew he was the right artist because they felt his illustrations were powerful, exaggerated, and animated. "His stuff is excellent. He can take the energy from the rap songs and draw it on the characters' expressions without making it look corny," **KRS-One** raved.

The creators believe that, by combining art and music to breathe life into the story, this project will pull rap fans into the comic. "You see kids listening to songs on their walkmans over and over again — music can go deeper than TV or books," Chess noted. "With something like this, kids learn how to read. . ." Baker added.

The team experienced illiteracy among urban, minority children firsthand during the recording of the comic book's sound track. "We wanted to use some street kids to provide the voices of the characters, but they couldn't read the script," Chess said.

KRS-One expressed the opinion that educators need to redesign their teaching techniques to include more projects such as **BREAK THE CHAIN** and to better utilize modern tools such as television. "Kids would use them to go on educational missions and then get tested at the end of the day. I guarantee everyone would be in school," he voiced.

When the creators searched for a comic book company to produce **BREAK THE CHAIN**, Todd explained that Marvel became interested because, "Marvel has an ever-increasing commitment to diversity, and to taking advantage of new technology as it becomes available." Chess elaborated that Marvel realizes, "In the '90s, companies have to understand what's happening. There are so many new formats, like CD Rom and novels on discs. There are good, different things to bring comic books into."

The three were quick to point out that, in the storm of polybagged, glow-in-the-dark, foil embossed comic books, this project stands apart. "It's not a gimmick. If anything, it's a new form. It's a soundtrack. If you were to just listen to the tape, you wouldn't get it, you wouldn't understand the sound effects," Baker noted. "If it has a story, a story for everybody, you get something out of it. With a gimmick, you don't get anything out of it," **KRS-One** added.

They asserted that **BREAK THE CHAIN** is an improvement on the "Books and Records" Marvel produced in the 1970s because the tape and the comic book were not created separately, but were produced together in mind for this specific project. "It's a symbiotic product. To get the full experience, you need both. It's a new medium," Todd explained. "This is a new way to listen to a tape — it's audio/visual. It takes you to 3-D dimensions," **KRS-One** said. "It's a weird experience — it's a comic you can dance to. It's a virtual comic book," Baker added.

> "It's a weird experience — it's a comic you can dance to."

The creators hope **BREAK THE CHAIN** will be a commercial success so they can continue producing Sonic Comics with different guest star rappers. "We're hoping this will be a series — maybe something quarterly," Baker said. "We've already got a great story in mind about 'gangstas'" — with a huge car chase," Todd added.

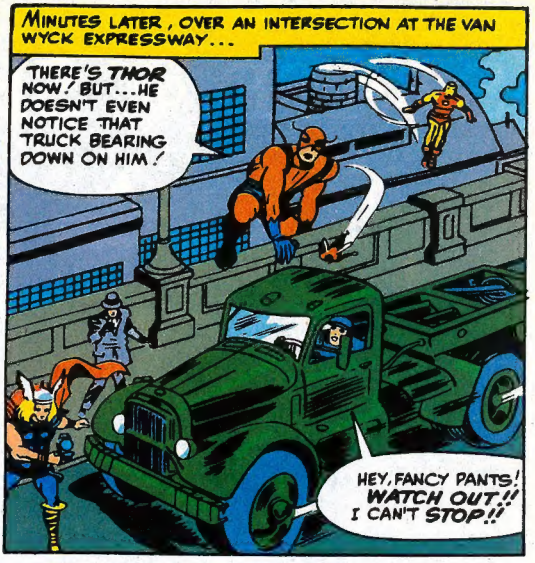
If **BREAK THE CHAIN** is well-received, Todd believes this will demonstrate that there is a demand for crossovers between various types of music, like heavy metal or alternative rock, and comic books. Because **BREAK THE CHAIN** will be handled by a major record distributor as well as comic book distributors, Todd explained, "this will test the waters to see how well something like this sells in record stores.

"Everybody in music I've talked to has said, 'I love comics.' Musicians want to do things like this," he added.

Readers who want to experience what could be a new comic book entertainment form can look on the newsstands *and* in record stores in October for **BREAK THE CHAIN**. It may not be the first polybagged #1 issue, but it is the first comic book that tells readers to turn the page when they hear **KRS-One** say "Word!"

– Bill Rosemann

Stan's SOAP BOX


MINUTES LATER, OVER AN INTERSECTION AT THE VAN WYCK EXPRESSWAY...
THERE'S THOR NOW! BUT...HE DOESN'T EVEN NOTICE THAT TRUCK BEARING DOWN ON HIM!
HEY, FANCY PANTS! WATCH OUT!! I CAN'T STOP!!

Hi, Heroes!

Reality. It's a word we all know and use constantly, but how do you really define it — especially in the way-out world of comic books?

Back in the early '60s, when the mighty Marvel Universe was just beginning, we decided to make a conscious effort to inject reality into all of our super hero sagas.

I can almost hear some of you thinking, "You've gotta be kidding! How do you write about guys with super powers who can fly and stick to ceilings and lift buildings and travel to other dimensions — and then use the word 'reality' in the same sentence?"

SUE STORM, TOO, PROWLS THE VAST METROPOLIS IN HER OTHER IDENTITY AS THE INVISIBLE GIRL!
THE BOWERY! HAVEN OF LOST SOULS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT JOHNNY WOULD EVER COME HERE!

Well, since you bothered to ask, let me try to explain.

It's our objective to make every Marvel tale as exciting and wildly imaginative as possible. But, the most important element in any story is the element of belief. You, the reader, have to believe in the characters and in what they're doing. Let's take Spider-Man, for example. In order to derive the full measure of enjoyment in each Spidey thriller, it's necessary for you to accept that a man bitten by a radioactive spider could gain the wall-crawling, web-swinging powers of an arachnid. In other words, you've got to believe.

Now here's the crucial part. In order to help you accept the basic fantastic concept, we tried to make every other element in Spidey's adventures as realistic as possible. We let him live in the sort of neighborhood we've all seen and are familiar with; we gave him the kind of family situation and problems with which any reader can identify; we saddled him with the same money woes and hang-ups that you and I might have; and we did something even more radical — something you may not even have been aware of when you first started reading Spidey — you may have just accepted it, taken it for granted without realizing that no other company but Marvel had ever done such a thing before. Can you guess what thing I'm referring to?

It has to do with the word "reality" again. If we want everything in our stories to be real, then our characters have to live in the real world, right? That means neither Spidey, nor the Fantastic Four, nor Iron Man, nor any other of our proud plethora of powerful heroes live in Gotham City or Metropolis or Center City or Pleasantville or wherever. No way! They live in New York, or San Francisco, or London, or, in some more extreme cases, Atlantis or Asgard — but they live in places that are identifiable, that are real. And in the cases of Atlantis and Asgard (and the various galaxies and star systems that we also include from time to time), even if they're legendary, they're *real* legendary names!

But it goes even further than using actual cities. When Johnny Storm wanted to stay home and work on his car, he didn't fiddle around with a Whizzbang V-8 or some such. Nope, he went right over to his Chevy Corvette and did his thing. When the Fantastic Four set up their headquarters in the Baxter Building, we placed it smack on the east side of Manhattan, and you wouldn't believe how many FF fans have trudged the streets in that area looking for the building.

THE ANGEL CAN KEEP HIS WINGS! I'VE GOT MY OWN WAYS TO MAKE TIME!
HERE'S WHERE THE BEAST CATCHES HIMSELF THE NEW HAVEN COMMUTER SPECIAL TO WESTCHESTER!
SHAZ

I guess you get the idea. Our plot points may deal with fantasy, but Marvel was, is, and always will be grounded in reality! Or, as you yourself are probably itching to say, "Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus!"

Excelsior!

- Stan Lee

STATE OF SHOCK

What is it about people that makes them crave a good scare? What is it about the supernatural and the unknown that fascinates everyone so much?

"Horror is ordinary people fighting things beyond the scope of normal life," Editor/writer Chris Cooper explained. "Usually, not always, they are triumphant. It's the ultimate message for our time. I think people have forgotten just how much power they have. They look at tremendous forces like pollution and discrimination and think, 'these are too big, there's nothing I can do about that.' They forget how much power they, as individuals, have to affect the world."

"Horror does that in a parable," he continued. "There's a tremendous extraordinary force that these ordinary people have to fight. These

"The status is, all Hell is breaking loose."

people are not super heroes, but somehow they find the wherewithal to beat the vampire or destroy the warlord or turn back Pinhead, and that's the essence of horror."

MIDNIGHT MAYHEM

Just what is the state of the supernatural in the Marvel Universe these days?

"The status is, all hell is breaking loose. Everything we've been planning from the beginning, as far as the **MIDNIGHT SONS**, is coming to its final culmination," Group Editor Bobbie Chase said. "These supernatural fighters had to come together — the nine — to keep the inter-dimensional walls from crumbling so that all the horrific

supernatural things wouldn't flood the earth. Unfortunately, they couldn't keep it together, and it's finally happening."

Unfortunately for the heroes, but fortunately for readers who will be treated to the "Siege of Darkness" crossover beginning this month and continuing through November.

"In the crossover, the walls crumble and, now more than ever, the Midnight Sons, which they will call themselves *officially*, have to band together in order to fight those forces from the other side," Chase said.

Major changes will occur during the two month "Siege," things that will bond the characters together on a permanent basis. "They're going to stay together and play together as a better group," Chase explained. "They're going to have their own base of operations, which is in Brooklyn under the mausoleum in the Cypress Hills Cemetery.

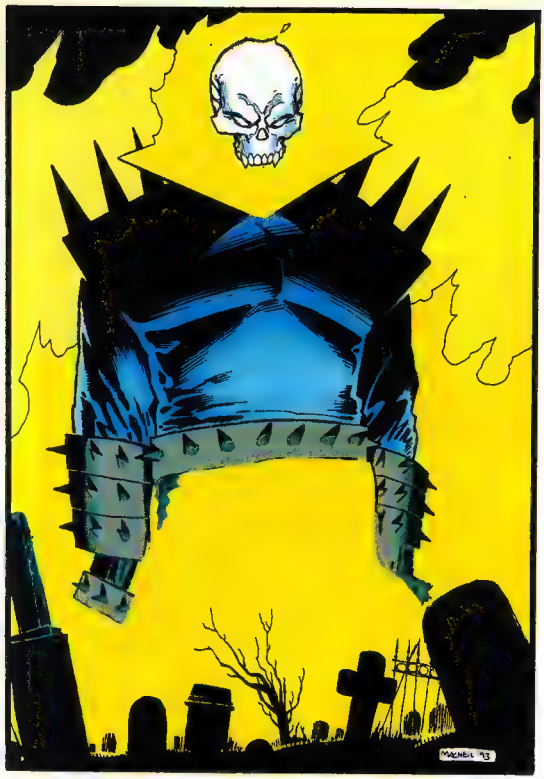
"Dr. Strange and some of the other members are going to find a lot of enduring repercussions coming out of this," she elaborated, "Ghost Rider is going to change forevermore, and we're going to have a strong character emerging out of this crossover to be a major player in the **SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE** book and **GHOST RIDER.**

"Morbius is going to take on a whole new personality because he's been infected with Lilin blood. We know now that Ghost Rider is not Zarathos, but the two are going to have a major battle as a result of [their first clash]."

STRANGE TALES

Now officially a part of the Midnight Sons, "Dr. Strange is going to change drastically, to the point that he is no longer Sorcerer Supreme, and we're going to have a *new* Sorcerer Supreme in the Marvel Universe," Chase said. "He's going to be the group's mentor, much like Professor X to the X-Men."

"The Midnight Sons are supernatural super heroes," Editor Evan Skolnick added. "Dr. Strange is the *original* supernatural super hero, so how can you have this line of books without having Dr. Strange in it? It's a wrong that's been righted. Maybe it should've been done earlier, but now we're doing it . . . with a vengeance!



"Being the oldest character of the group makes him the mentor, but he's lost so many of his powers it puts him in the position of knowing more and not being powerful enough to affect anything. It's a unique role because he is so much more knowledgeable about the events around him than they are but in his weakened state, the question will be, will they listen to him?"

Originally, the Darkhold Redeemers were to take residence with Dr. Strange in his mansion, but David Quinn, who will be writing **DR. STRANGE**, "had very specific ideas as to what he wanted to do with the mansion," Evan noted. "The storyline David came up with wouldn't make sense if other people were living with him. Not even Wong or his fiancé. He's marshaling his forces because he's gotten so weak."

DARKNESS FALLS

Though the **MIDNIGHT SONS** books tend to hover between super hero and supernatural, the two titles which most closely resemble a classic horror line are **NIGHTSTALKERS** and **DARKHOLD**.

"We knew **DARKHOLD** was going to be a hard sell," Chase said. "It's the most horror oriented of the books and our audience is super hero, for the most part. It was a gamble, but we tried it because we thought it was a worthwhile project, and it hasn't worked out. But I think that there's a lot to be done with the characters, so we're keeping them around. **NIGHTSTALKERS** again, was a little bit more into the horror realm and I don't think we have the audience for that at Marvel necessarily. We're playing with that book and we're going to see where we can take it."

"**NIGHTSTALKERS** is really super heroes with an occult twist," Editor Chris Cooper said. "They're super heroes which exist in the dark side of the Marvel Universe."

Changes abound for **NIGHTSTALKERS** after issue thirteen, with a new new artist and editor. Steven Grant (**PUNISHER**) will continue to write the series and Andrew (**X-MEN ADVENTURES**) Wildman will take over artistic duties.

"[Wildman] is redesigning the costumes for Hannibal King and Drake which will debut in the 'Siege of Darkness'," Cooper said. "Basically this is the first time that Blade has to work with the others since the 'Midnight Massacre' [when] he turned into his demonic state — Switchblade. He really doesn't think much of Morbius. He hates Modred because the two of them were ripping each other's guts out. So Blade is going to have to work with these folks for the first time since he killed them."

"I really like these characters, but it's a horror comic! Horrible things happen!"

Cooper, who created and has written **DARKHOLD** from its inception discussed that book's part in the crossover: "The most interesting stuff hasn't even happened yet. It will probably come up in the last issue, and the addendum which will wrap up the whole **DARKHOLD** saga in **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #145**.

"The Malachi Prophecy will be revealed and it doesn't mean what everyone thought it did. It's going to have a dramatic devastating effect on these characters. I really like these characters, but it's a horror comic! Horrible things happen!" Cooper said, laughing. "One of them is going to find out something really horrible on the last page, something that will literally change her life and the life inside her."

Though **DARKHOLD** will be canceled after issue 16, the mystery behind what's been powering the Black Letters will be revealed and "it is *not* what everyone thought. In fact, we find that nothing is what it seemed to be all along."

"The Malachi Prophecy is very important. It informs you of everything going on in the book. 'A child born of no man and out of a woman marked by sin'," Cooper said.

UNTOUCHED REALMS

"The Midnight Sons, like the Marvel Universe, have got to expand. It's got to become more than what it is," **MIDNIGHT SONS UNLIMITED** Editor Evan Skolnick said.

"Our intention is to bring the Midnight Sons team closer together

through the October/November crossover and unify them as a group. The **UNLIMITED** is where we will see them as a group," said Skolnick.

Shifting the format from four or five stories to only one or two per issue, Evan hopes to offer a different take on what the **UNLIMITED** will be able to accomplish. "Different characters will team up. You might see the Darkhold Redeemers with Dr. Strange. It's also a place where we get to introduce new characters," Evan said.

Plans for the Midnight Sons titles include Blaze in his own limited series written by **GHOST RIDER** and **SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE** scribe Howard Mackie. "Howard's writing has been knock down, drag out stories that are really fun," Chase said. "The new artist on **SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE**, Henry Martinez, is doing some nice stuff and I'm pleased to introduce him as a new artist for Marvel. David Quinn is also new to Marvel and his work on Dr. Strange is really nice."

"Our books are the dark underbelly of the Marvel Universe," Skolnick said. "If Marvel is the house, we're definitely the creepy, dark cellar."

A HELL ALL HIS OWN

Somewhere in the depths of the Marvel Universe resides a prince of sorts, A Prince of Lies, as he is often called — Daimon Hellstrom. Editor Fabian Nicieza is hopeful that he's "in a very comfortable corner, far, far away from everything else that's going on out there."

"[**HELLSTORM**] was never meant to be a part of the Midnight Sons, and he is not a part of the mainstream Marvel Universe. If anyone looks at the books which have come out so far, they're going to see that it was not intended to be like that," Fabian explained. "What makes him different from the other horror titles is that I don't perceive him as either: (A) a supernatural super hero or; (B) a horror book *per se*. More than anything, Hellstorm is an investigator of things that interest him; both the chess player and the chess piece in the game of life he's involved in.

"I do not want him to be too heavily involved in the Marvel Universe. I want him to be a part of his very own little universe, and if that sub-universe is successful, it can generate support characters into their own spin off titles like Gabrial, the Gargoyle, or, all foreshadowing fully intended, Satana."

HELLSTORM relates to the tortured soul of one character, and does not use much blood and gore in its stories. "More than anything, it's meant to be a book about what motivates people good and bad, and why," Fabian said. "We're going to get more and more into that in the second arc of the book's run."

The second arc storyline, "Incarnate Souls," written by Len Kaminski, penciled and inked by Peter Gross, involves Daimon discovering that there are wandering souls which have been released from Hell which have found their way into other living beings. "It's a four part story arc," according to Kaminski, "beginning with 'Found Souls' and concluding in 'Birth Rights.'"

Daimon is in search of the souls in order to gather them up and lead them to the "mountain of judgment." During his mission to return these souls, Daimon finds he is forced to confront some things about himself and learn things he did not expect, or believe, were true. The series has many biblical allegories, though the mythos is completely contrived for the title itself, and does not derive from modern day religion.

"What he learns in the first chapter is going to lead him into a conclusive confrontation with his father, and will shake and shatter what he believes of himself and what he believes about his father, along with what his place is in the Marvel underworld realm," Fabian added. "It's what we had in mind all along for the book, which is why it's subtitled 'Prince of Lies.' It's not just because he's a habitual liar, but also because he's been lied to his whole life."

BACK FROM THE GRAVE

Riding the wave of the popularity of today's horror titles Marvel will re-present classic tales of the macabre.

No stranger to the Midnight Sons family, writer/artist Mort Todd is taking horror books out of their graves as editor of four reprint titles beginning this month. Beginning the first week of October and continuing throughout the month, **MONSTER MENACE**, **CURSE OF THE WEIRD**, **SUPER HEROES VS. DRACULA** and **BOOK OF THE DEAD** will all find new life.

"Look at any of the original Marvel comics, from **FANTASTIC FOUR** to **THOR**, and they're all fighting big monster characters," Editor Todd said. "They were all instrumental in building the Marvel Universe and as a result, there is a cycle. It seems to me that every twenty years or so, horror becomes popular again. The [Jack] Kirby stuff in the 50's, **GHOST RIDER** and the original **MIDNIGHT SONS** in the 70's and now again in the 90's.

"I think all these comics show their origins. The Kirby books show how Marvel began and **MAN THING** and **FRANKENSTEIN** show the environment in which the **MIDNIGHT SONS** were created. There's definitely a connection between these books and the Midnight Sons."

MONSTER MENACE will reprint the original Lee/Kirby/Ditko tales with new covers by Kyle (*Why I hate Saturn*) Baker and Steve Ditko. **CURSE OF THE WEIRD** collects many of the most bizarre pre-code tales illustrated by artists like Ditko, Bill Everett, Basil Wolverton, and Joe Kubert. The first three issues have introductions by Lee, Kirby, and Ditko, and there will be covers by Ditko, Alex Toth, and Rick Alterqott.

"**CURSE OF THE WEIRD** will definitely appeal to the E.C. market that's out there," Todd said, "while the **DRACULA** titles will feature work that will entice our main core audience, the super hero fan."

"**SUPER HEROES**" **VS. DRACULA** will reprint four different stories, one per issue including **X-MEN VS. DRACULA** by Chris Claremont, Bill Sienkiewicz and Bob Wiacek; **SPIDER-MAN VS. DRACULA** by Len Wein, Ross Andru and Don Heck, with a cover by Joe Madureira and Harry Candelario; **SILVER SURFER VS. DRACULA** by Marv Wolfman, Gene Colan and Tom Palmer, with a cover by **SURFER** artist Ron Lim and Jimmy Palmiotti; and **DR. STRANGE VS. DRACULA** in the final issue by Marv Wolfman, Steve Englehart, Gene Colan and Tom Palmer, with cover art by Michael Golden.

Classic Man-Thing and Frankenstein tales will be collected in **THE BOOK OF THE DEAD**. Tennyson Smith created a fully painted Man-Thing cover for the first issue, and the second features Gray Morrow's rendition of Frankenstein. "The Frankenstein origin [by Gary Friedrich and Mike Ploog — creators of the original Ghost Rider] is the best adaptation I've ever seen in a movie, TV or book. It's a really faithful adaptation and the art is great.

"I'm trying to make all these titles *look* different and appeal to different markets. **BOOK OF THE DEAD** will definitely appeal to the *Vertigo* crowd," Todd added.

"I know reprints often get the onus of being second rate," Todd said. "I see it as being like a movie on video. A lot of people can't see these original comics, because it's too difficult to find the back issues, and they deserve to be seen!"

With plans for the Midnight Sons books exploding with new characters, the reissuing of classic horror tales, and the continuing adventures of **HELLSTORM**, the dark corner of the Marvel Universe is definitely casting its shadow further than ever.

– *Lia M. Pelosi*

Dark Icons

Starting this fall, Marvel's Midnight Sons will evince a strong sense of family unity as they unveil their very own "family crest." The crest, or "trade dress" (as it is called by the industry-savvy), is a dagger-shaped icon that will adorn the cover of every book in the Midnight Sons line. Thus, in addition to kicking off the long-anticipated "Siege of Darkness" crossover, the December-dated issues of the Midnight Sons books (**NIGHTSTALKERS #14, DOCTOR STRANGE #60, DARKHOLD #15, GHOST RIDER #44, MORBIUS #16, SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #17, MIDNIGHT SONS UNLIMITED #4,** and **MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #143**) will also flaunt the eye-catching new emblem designed to perfectly capture their brooding, Gothic essence.

Yet, the trade dress does not merely function as a stylish insignia — it has a practical purpose as well. Editor Bobbie Chase, the catalyst of this iconographic endeavor, felt the need to "solidify" the family grouping of titles.

"Instead of trying to collect every single Marvel comic, many fans today tend to focus on a particular group of titles," Chase explained. Therefore, for the legions of Midnight Sons readers, the new trade dress makes each member of Marvel's nocturnal family readily identifiable. By looking for the distinctive

. . .the Midnight Sons icon acts as an omen of things to come.

icon, fans will be able to immediately discern a Midnight Sons book among the others on their newsstand or specialty store shelf.

Once the need for the trade dress had been established, the only question that remained was, "What should it look like?" As Assistant Editor James Felder attested, there were two fundamental requirements: "First, the trade dress had to be identifiable with the Midnight Sons, but not specific to any one character. Second, it had to reflect the hard-edged tastes of our readership." The editorial staff felt both criteria were fulfilled by the stunning vision of Nancy Ogami. This

Nancy Ogami

talented California-based designer, who includes among her credits the movie logo for *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, found the task of designing the trade dress similar to walking a tightrope. "I wanted to evoke a hard edge, but at the same time keep it accessible to younger readers. Also, I tried to make it striking, but simple enough so as not to interfere with the scope of the cover design," Ogami related. Ultimately, she submitted eight different designs, ranging from Gothic heraldic flags to bolder, more *avant-garde* creations. Yet it was the dagger design — sharp, deadly, vengeful — that seemed to epitomize the zeitgeist of the Midnight Sons. "The image effectively conveys the sense of life on the edge," Felder remarked. "You immediately get the sense that this is not your father's **TOMB OF DRACULA.**"

The icon seemed so strikingly appropriate for the Midnight Sons that the decision was made to incorporate it into the actual storyline of each book. "I really can't get into too much detail, but let's just say [the trade dress] will have a great deal of significance for all the books by the end of the big crossover. . .and beyond," Editor Evan Skolnick teased.

"The image effectively conveys the sense of life on the edge."

While the Midnight Sons will be the first Marvel family to bear a unifying crest, readers can be sure they won't be the last. Executive Editor Mark Gruenwald contended that, "as the Marvel Universe continues to expand, the solid family identity between books becomes even more necessary. Now, every trade dress will not be as bold as the Midnight Sons'. Books that are closer to 'the mainstream' will likely carry a more subtle design. Nevertheless, within the next year, virtually all Marvel books will feature a trade dress," Gruenwald decreed.

Like the Seven Seals in the Book of Revelations, the Midnight Sons icon acts as an omen of things to come. However, unlike its Biblical counterparts, this icon does not presage the end of a universe but, rather, the unified expansion of one.

– *Jon-Peter Kelly*

"I wanted to evoke a hard edge. . ."

It all BEGAN in the halls of a GREAT METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPER. The YEAR was 1939 and SUPER HEROES were just BEGINNING to make their PRESENCE felt...
Word's out that that SUB-MARINER character has just rounded up a GANG down by the DOCKS. You get me an INTERVIEW, junior, and MAYBE you won't be a CUB REPORTER for much longer!
YES SIR!!
HEMBECK
Grab your CAMERA, Jim! What a DELIGHTFUL PRIVILEGE we have before us--we're gonna talk to a SUPER HERO!
Fine. Just let me grab a DONUT...
Soon...
THERE he is!
Mr. Sub-Mariner--SIR! A MOMENT of your time, please?
eh?
My NEWSPAPER'S readers deeply ADMIRE you--as do I--for all the GOOD DEEDS you've performed. Howabout letting us know a little bit MORE about you?
Save your CHILDISH CURIOSITY, surfaceman... WHAT Prince Namor DOES is strictly for HIMSELF and the Golden Realm of ATLANTIS!
Had those thugs not gotten ahold of a PRICELESS ATLANTEAN ARTIFACT, I assure you, I NEVER would've concerned myself with them!
Mine is an UNEASY ALLIANCE with the surface world, and THAT could change at ANY time --THAT is ALL you need to know about me!
SPLASH!
=sputter= Why, that NO GOOD, EGOTISTICAL OAF!! How DARE he act so SUPERIOR?!? With his POWER and his ATTITUDE, he's extremely DANGEROUS!
Listen to my VOW: I DEDICATE my life to EXPOSING these super characters for what they TRULY are: UNCONTROLLABLE PSYCHOPATHS!! Why, I'll BUY the PAPER and use it to make sure EVERYONE--
WHOA pal, simmer down!
..Aren't you taking this all a little TOO SERIOUSLY, J.J.?..
BAH!
And from that day on, it was a RARE day when a Marvel super-hero received GOOD PRESS COVERAGE!

Mark's REMARKS

Every single book Marvel publishes has its rabid fans, regular readers, and a core group of paying customers who believe that that title is the best one that Marvel publishes. What entertains you, after all, boils down to a matter of individual taste and sensibility, and one of the fascinating things about the human species is that we don't all think alike.

This is not to suggest that all our books are equally popular. Some routinely sell more than five hundred thousand copies a month, others fewer than fifty thousand. Therefore, it's possible to say some Marvel titles are ten times more popular than others.

I can certainly relate to those of you readers with esoteric tastes, who don't necessarily march in sync with the majority. I will not condemn mainstream tastes; on rare occasions I find the mainstream catching up to something I've long been a fanatic about. But for the most part, what motivates me is a little off the beaten track — I can't help it. Evidence for my peculiar aesthetics can be found in my choice of writing assignments. I've had opportunities to work on higher profile projects, but I really love the mid-to-low popularity characters I'm doing.

One of the good things about Marvel these days is that we keep books around long enough that they can find their core audience. In the '70s and '80s we were much more likely to pull the plug on a book which seemed to have limited mass appeal. Compare the relatively short original runs of the **SILVER SURFER**, **SHE-HULK**, and **WARLOCK** to their second launches in the late '80s/early '90s. One of the main reasons for this change is the direct sales market that grew up since then. It was a harsher, less forgiving world when comics *had* to sell 28 percent of their print runs on the newsstand in order to break even, and avoid cancellation (the other 72 percent were returned, unsold, and — *gasp* — destroyed, but we still had to pay to print them). With direct market stores taking titles on a non-returnable basis today, we only print up as many copies of a title as retailers ordered, guaranteeing us that 100% of our print run will be bought. Consequently, print runs that were once too small to break even on are now profitable enough to continue, and books which would have once been canceled are now kept alive.

So while Marvel doesn't publish anything that loses money, some titles obviously make more money than others. And with the profit-sharing incentive program Marvel has — based on sales — writers, artists, and editors are better served to work on titles that have more mainstream appeal. So next time you write a letter saying "Why did you let Creative Person X switch from Book A to Book B — I liked his work on Book A much better," check the sales figures. Chances are good he switched to a better-selling title.

At my day job as senior executive editor, I assist the editor in chief in determining Marvel's publishing program, including which new titles ought to be added, and which titles ought to be subtracted. Marvel's monthly roster has grown to somewhere on the order of 80 to 100 titles per month. Contrary to any rumors wafting about, Marvel does not plan on expanding the number of publications we're going to publish in 1994. We feel we're at about the right size relative to the rest of the marketplace.

But we *are* going to be adding lots of new titles in '94, and since we do not plan on expanding the line, that means some titles are going to have to go away to make room. If you're a dedicated follower of somewhat less mainstream titles, like I am, this means some of your cult faves may be disappearing in the next year.

In times past, if you ever got word that a title was being canceled, you could automatically anticipate the reason: poor sales. But, as I've explained, nowadays poor sales are relative. The criteria we use to determine which books get the axe are somewhat less cut and dried these days. I'd like to share with you some of our thought processes, so you can know what factors we consider when Marvel cancels a title. (Just do me a favor and keep this column from our competition, okay?)

There are four major reasons why we publish or continue any title, and you can rank order those reasons in descending priority.

The first reason to publish a title is sales. Marvel is a for-profit company and titles that make profits should be the ones we publish. On the creative side, a title that has high sales means that it is popular and reaches a wide audience. All of

our creative types want to share their work with as many readers as possible.

The second reason to publish a title is contractual or legal. We make a deal with some outside licensor to do a title and, even if its sales sink to marginal, we still make room for it on the schedule for the duration of the contract. Sometimes we will even renew marginal sellers in order to maintain good relations with valued outside licensors. Occasionally we will have good legal reasons to publish a fully-owned-by-Marvel title — to prevent a trademark from lapsing, for instance.

The third reason to publish a title is niche. A book which caters to a limited specific demographic segment or niche audience can be valuable, enabling us to reach readers who buy no other Marvel titles. As an example, the excellent **BARBIE** material appeals primarily to a younger female audience which is probably not buying any of our other titles. While **BARBIE** does not sell **X-MEN** numbers, were we to discontinue it we would jettison a special audience we can currently reach in no other way. Thus, we keep alive niche books in order to broaden our audience base as much as possible.

The fourth reason to publish a title is gut reaction. Somebody — an editor or exec ed or editor in chief — has a gut feeling that a given title is good and is something Marvel should publish, either for the prestige or just in case it can develop a specific niche or a mainstream audience. Obviously, an editor can feel something is good and worthy and be unable to convince his or her peers and superiors to go out on a limb. Nothing Marvel publishes is without its fervent in-house supporters, but when all the factors are weighed, gut reaction is fourth in priority, and an editor can only argue in favor of a marginally profitable book on grounds of gut reaction alone for so long.

So, when in the next year you notice some Marvel titles suspending publication, you will know that: (1) it was probably not selling up to expectations; (2) there was no compelling external reason to keep it going; (3) it filled no niche that new or existing titles do not also fill, and; (4) the gut reaction of the editorial and creative team was insufficient to make a credible case to the editor in chief and sales department for its continued survival.

Fortunately, our characters never really die, and our company's going to stay in business long enough for those characters to have another chance in the spotlight. Seventies characters with their own books, like Ghost Rider, Deathlok, Warlock, and Morbius, among others, all were canceled only to find far greater success a decade later. I have no doubt that the best of what we discontinue will return, and very possibly the second-best of what we discontinue will also return, so dramatically improved you won't believe we ever had to cancel them. Perhaps the best lesson of all can be drawn from the **X-MEN**, a title that wasn't exactly canceled by the end of the sixties, but went into reprints for more than five years before being relaunched. Now it is the most popular, best-selling title we do. Who knows what near-misses of today may become the biggest hits of tomorrow? Not me.

– *Mark Gruenwald*

THE BOSSMEN by RICK PARKER

MMMM... DAT DERE TRIPLE-DEKKA SANDWICH WIT' PASTRAMI, BALONEY, SALAMI AND NUTZA-RELLA ON DIET BREAD SOUNDS GOOD...
MMMM...
EH—! WOT'S DIS?!
DAT LEAK IS DEFINITELY FROM TERRY'S OFFICE."
HEY, TOM... LOOK—! YOU'RE IN COLOR!!!
EH, MARK! IF TERRY WANTED DIS STRIP TA BE IN COLOR WHY DON'T HE JUST SAY SO?
WELL... I GUESS HE BELIEVES IN THE TRICKLE DOWN THEORY OF PUBLISHING.
©MARVEL PRESIDENT TERRY STEWART.

Epicenter

Both sides of Armageddon

WAR IS HELL. In 1973-1975, Marvel published a short-lived comic by this title. And in the fall of 1993, the purgatorial comic book tradition will be one-upped. October will see the release of two new monthly titles that, for the first time, will chronicle adventures on *both* sides of a never-ending battle birthed of the fertile nightmares of Clive Barker.

It's a mythology based on a never-ending war, wherein terrifying creatures of ultimate order — known as Cenobites — prey upon an unsuspecting, chaotic world — our society. The victims of the Cenobites are enticed into a domain more terrifyingly heinous than any of Dante's twisted imaginings, there to be laid at the feet of its ruler, the iconic Leviathan. And scheming above it all, Leviathan's Favored Son, Pinhead, makes his preparations for the final subjugation and transformation of Mankind. The Cenobites are the seasoned warriors on one side, and fodder for the daring new monthly **PINHEAD** series written by D.G. Chichester and drawn by Dario Carrascous, with James Sanders III.

PINHEAD, THESE ARE YOUR LIVES

"In PINHEAD, we'll touch on Cenobitic culture that a lot of writers didn't address in the [**CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER**] anthology," D.G. Chichester said. "We'll reveal a lot of their theology and motivations and how the hierarchy is structured — but not too much. Even though Pinhead is the central figure, we want him to remain a figure of mystery. The way we're doing that is to take a page from the old **TOMB OF DRACULA** series, and delve more into the supporting characters, propelling the story through them. Pinhead will maintain a central position, but those around him will be very important to shaping his destiny.

"The Cenobites are not the villains in this book," Chichester remarked, showing the war from their perspective. Some of it will, of course, be reprehensible, but our underlying goal is to show their social order, and what makes them what they are."

The first storyline in **PINHEAD** involves stopping a force that is tearing hell apart. Someone or something is going back in time to steal the LeMarchand Puzzles that open the doorway to beyond. With the puzzles kept from the hands of those who would become the Cenobitic elite, Leviathan is robbed of the heart of its warrior force. Pinhead must go back in time to find out who's behind this conspiracy, and cut him off at the pass in an adventure that starts in the Old West and takes readers on a dizzying journey through the timestream.

"Pinhead's time travel device sends

him back into earlier incarnations of himself," Chichester revealed, "and we learn that Pinhead's been around a great deal longer than anyone — including [he] himself — has known. He has been many things. . . many things. And as he goes further back, it becomes harder for him to maintain control of his other various selves. We'll be exploring the humanity in each of these inhuman creatures."

CODE APPROVED CENOBITES:

With the introduction last year of Leviathan's antithesis, the Goddess Morté Mammé, Cenobitic destiny was certain to change. When seven randomly-chosen individuals freed her from centuries-long imprisonment, her war against Leviathan and Pinhead began anew, with her saviors at the first line of attack. Their commando raids on the Cenobites are chronicled in the new monthly series **THE HARROWERS: RAIDERS OF THE ABYSS**, written by Zink Inc. and Malcolm Smith, and illustrated by Gene Colan (of TOMB OF DRACULA fame) with Joe Rubenstein.

"These are regular people with marginal jobs and marginal lives," Malcolm Smith said, who works closely with Clive Barker on **HARROWERS** storylines, "who are given super powers and are suddenly working for a goddess; regular joes drafted into the position of going into hell to rescue souls. This is no game with secret identities to hide behind. They're heroes whose lives are changed forever. They're at war, now. Their old lives are over."

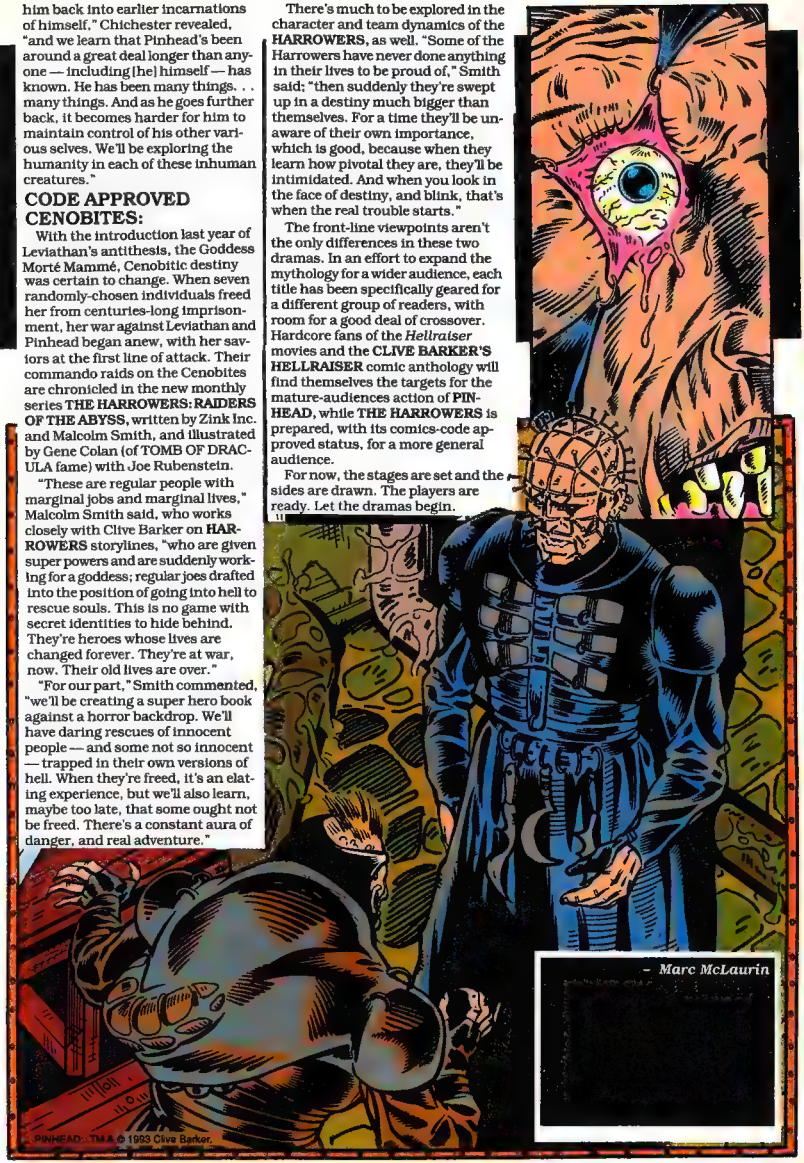
"For our part," Smith commented, "we'll be creating a super hero book against a horror backdrop. We'll have daring rescues of innocent people — and some not so innocent — trapped in their own versions of hell. When they're freed, it's an elating experience, but we'll also learn, maybe too late, that some ought not be freed. There's a constant aura of danger, and real adventure."

There's much to be explored in the character and team dynamics of the **HARROWERS**, as well. "Some of the Harrowers have never done anything in their lives to be proud of," Smith said; "then suddenly they're swept up in a destiny much bigger than themselves. For a time they'll be unaware of their own importance, which is good, because when they learn how pivotal they are, they'll be intimidated. And when you look in the face of destiny, and blink, that's when the real trouble starts."

The front-line viewpoints aren't the only differences in these two dramas. In an effort to expand the mythology for a wider audience, each title has been specifically geared for a different group of readers, with room for a good deal of crossover. Hardcore fans of the *Hellraiser* movies and the **CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER** comic anthology will find themselves the targets for the mature-audiences action of **PINHEAD**, while **THE HARROWERS** is prepared, with its comics-code approved status, for a more general audience.

For now, the stages are set and the sides are drawn. The players are ready. Let the dramas begin.

– Marc McLaurin



PINHEAD: TM & © 1993 Clive Barker.

Hot Sheet

QUOTE OF THE MONTH — "The task of creating a bold new comics universe has proven more and more difficult in the last decade. However, leave it to Marvel Comics to show everyone how it's done. . . With a combination of original characters and stylish reincarnations of the classics, the 2099 line is a powerful read. Perhaps the most endearing characteristic of 2099 is that although the world and times are much darker, the heroes are still noble."

— Richard Stockton of *Lone Star Comics*.

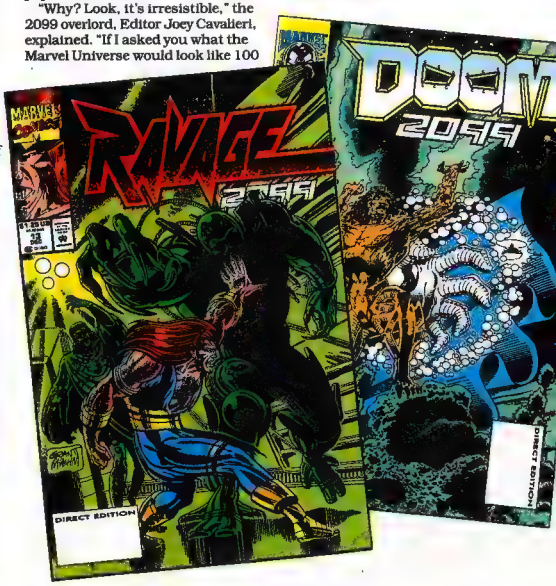
If history has taught us anything, it's that while the past repeats itself in altered forms, the future is still primarily about change. So, in that spirit, this issue's "Hot Sheet" will undergo a change of sorts while carrying forward the best of what has come before. This new "Hot Sheet" will still bring you an insider's view of the best upcoming projects Marvel has to offer, but beginning right now we will focus on a specific group of titles each month. This way, you can get a look behind the scenes of your favorite (or soon to be favorite) titles and hear what people inside of Marvel and around the country think of some books you shouldn't miss.

THE FUTURE IS NOW

What better way to enter a new era of change than by looking at Marvel's very own view of the future — the dynamically creative 2099 line of books. This unique group of titles brings you the Marvel Universe of the next century, a time when new heroes are rising to the unique challenges of their world decades after the end of the present-day Age of Heroes. So far, readers have been awed by the justice-driven **PUNISHER 2099**, the despotic **DOOM 2099**, the wall-crawling **SPIDER-MAN 2099**, the new mutants of **X-MEN 2099**, and the wild and feral **RAVAGE 2099**.

The first question that comes to mind is "why?" Why build a line of books around an era more than one hundred years beyond the wildly popular current Marvel Universe?

"Why? Look, it's irresistible," the 2099 overlord, Editor Joey Cavalieri, explained. "If I asked you what the Marvel Universe would look like 100 years from now, you couldn't leave the question alone. After the idea was put in my head, I just couldn't stop doodling in my sketchbook; I was filled with ideas and 'what ifs.' No one could pass this up!"



Initially, the 2099 books were launched under the guiding hand of Joey and his first assistant editor, Sarra Mosoff. However, it was after Sarra's recent promotion that the powerful 2099 lure was *further* revealed. To step behind Sarra's desk came none other than Assistant Editor Matthew Morra, who left his post as Group Editor Bobbie Chase's right hand on the blazing **GHOST RIDER** family. It seemed a strange move to go from the firmly established into the future unknown, but it was a time-trip to which Matt couldn't say 'no.'

"Joey's assistant was promoted and transferred into a different department," Morra reminisced, "and Joey wanted someone who could step into her shoes, so he came to me on his hands and knees and begged. . . But seriously, the opportunity arose to be a part of this historic undertaking, and I've loved the 2099 concept from the beginning. And it wasn't so much the concept as the execution of it that drew me here. Joey, like Bobbie Chase, has put together some of today's best comics creators to work on some unique creative stuff. It was a tough jump to leave Bobbie, but opportunities as unique as this don't come along often."

THE VOTES ARE IN

So far, the reader response to the efforts of the editorial staff and their creative teams has outstripped everyone's expectations. "The general fan consensus is that the 2099 titles are surprisingly exciting!" noted Gary Colabuono of the Chicago comic chain *Moondog's Inc.* "Fans didn't know what to expect and had suspicions that the 2099 books might not be up to the groundbreaking standards of the House of Ideas. Well, the superb scripts found in Peter David's **SPIDER-MAN 2099** and John Francis Moore's **DOOM 2099**, for example, pretty much snuffed out that skepticism."

And you can believe, as Gary's comments allude to, that everyone who reads the 2099 books has their favorite. Steve Gursky of the Pennsylvania/New Jersey chain *Steve's Comics Relief* is partial to the future incarnation of Marvel's most classic character. "I especially like **SPIDER-MAN 2099**, which features writing by Peter David and art by Rick Leonardi. While maintaining the core philosophy of the **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** ('with great power comes great responsibility'), Peter has created an interesting protagonist with his own reason for maintaining the philosophy."

DOOM 2099 inker John Nyberg, on the other hand, has so much admiration for the creators he works with that he was compelled to pick his own title as his favorite. "The thing that really does it for me on **DOOM** is the coloring," stated John in reference to the efforts of colorist Christie Scheele. "When I ink over Pat Broderick's pencils, I only see the art in black and white. It's great art in its own right. But when I see it in color, it just blows me away. Christie does a great job. I really like inking over Pat; he's a talented penciller. And sometimes, as an artist, I'm disappointed to see my work colored. But Christie's work really enhances the final product."

Finally, Steve Snyder of Ohio's *Central City Comics* is enamored with all he's seen so far. "Marvel's 2099 universe has become very intriguing during its first year. The corporate run world that is *badly* in need of superheroes is a great setting, and the heroes introduced so far are outstanding."

EVEN FARTHER INTO THE FUTURE

It would be remiss not to take a look at **RAVAGE 2099**, the first title featuring a character developed *specifically* for the 2099 world, created by Stan Lee and Paul Ryan and now written by Pat Mills & Tony Skinner and drawn by Grant Miehm. This progressive book, which features a character not tied to a current Marvel namesake, is perhaps the crystal ball to the future of 2099.

"We'll be trying over the next year or so to showcase more unique characters like Ravage," Joey Cavalieri prognosticated. "Of course, the easiest thing to do would be to do take-offs on current Marvel heroes and villains. It was a challenge at first because we were also creating an entirely new world at the same time. Now, however, it threatens to become less of a challenge and thus less fun. It's much more exciting to create new things. And I certainly don't want 2099 to become predictable.

"The whole 2099 concept is expanding wildly," Cavalieri continued. "Every issue of each title presents new possibilities, new roads to go down. For instance, Peter David came up with 'virtual unreality,' a concept that each book will get involved in, taking this new idea into even newer areas. We just keep introducing new things which themselves then become fodder for new stories."

Perhaps the first step in this direction is the tighter integration of the 2099 titles, set to happen this winter when the books take part in the "Fall of the Hammer" crossover (for more details, check out **MARVEL AGE #132**). The set-up for this event will take place very subtly over the next few months.

Matt Morra was willing to tantalize fans. "The one thing I'm looking forward to, and it may sound simple, but what's exciting to me not only as an editor, but as a fan and a reader, is that we're leading up to the first time these characters meet each other. It's sort of like the first time Spider-Man met the Fantastic Four; it's that exciting!

"From this, we're hoping to expand the line next year, and we know already that there will be one new book — it's already in the works, but I can't say what it is. I *will* say that we don't want to stick with only 2099 versions of present characters. We want to showcase some new creations in the rich 2099 setting, which in and of itself is a supporting character in each book."

HOT PICKS

Here's a quick look at the best non-2099 offerings for this Fall.

BREAK THE CHAIN — Kyle Baker and rapper **KRS-ONE** team up to bring you the ultimate rock and comic book collaboration in this tale of the inner city that will ship with a song-filled cassette tape. Project Editor Mort Todd calls **BREAK THE CHAIN** "the birth of a new interactive medium." And Gary Colabuono reminded readers not to lose sight of the creative importance this project represents. "Kyle Baker is a genius of the comic book art form. . . This book and cassette's message is to literally 'break the chain' [that binds inner city youth]. Baker's main protagonist tells young African American kids that pride in their culture means reading the teachings of [the likes of] Malcolm X, not just wearing 'X' caps and t-shirts."

PINHEAD — Clive Barker's best-loved evil cenobite gets his own ongoing book in this **HELLRAISER** spin-off written by versatile author Dan Chichester and drawn by newcomer Dario Carrasco and veteran inker Jim Sanders III. You can bet this book will be a scream. "One of Barker's most twisted creations finally gets to star in his own book," Steve Snyder raved. "The most interesting stories in the much missed **HELLRAISER** magazine starred Pinhead. Now we have an entire series devoted to him! This is the book fans wanted all along." Shawn Bantz of Southern California retail chain *Comics Unlimited* liked the looks of this new horror experience. "PINHEAD looks great! It's penciled very similarly to some of the work seen in the original **HELLRAISER** series. Barker fans will enjoy this series with fervor."

MORT THE DEAD TEENAGER — The colorful title of this four-issue limited series by Larry Hama and Gary Hallgren tells it all as they follow the adventures of a dead youngster who just can't leave this world without another laugh or three. Shawn Bantz just couldn't help but find humor in Larry's twisted story. "**MORT THE DEAD TEENAGER** [no relation to **BREAK THE CHAIN** Editor Mort Todd] is hilarious! You try to feel pity for this character, but you just wind up laughing."

– *Jerry A. Novick*

Here there be MARVELS

Phil Shelton wanders out onto the New York sidewalk, ecstatic that he has just sold a publisher his idea for a photojournalistic book on the super heroes.

A blush of red light illuminates anger painted on the faces of a mob of New Yorkers gathered among the skyscrapers. A construction worker has just been attacked by mutants.

Phil follows the crowd into an alley to see five masked figures cornered against a brick wall. The red light throbs from a strange visor wrapped across the eyes of one of them.

"It's a really ominous scene that gives you a new perspective on the mutant hysteria — why you would feel intimidated by someone able to shoot ray blasts that can cut you in half, or a man who can fly, or a man who blasts ice at you," Editor Marcus McLaurin said, describing his favorite scene in **MARVELS**, a four-issue, monthly 48-page bookshelf format series scheduled to start in November. "What this story does is explain how anyone can feel afraid, and what fear can do to galvanize and make people hate."

Indeed, McLaurin added, the series offers Marvel readers, young and old, a completely new take on the history of the Marvel Universe. What artist Alex Ross (*Miracleman*, **HELLRAISER**) and writer Kurt Busiek (**WEB OF SPIDER-MAN**, **DARKMAN**) dish out is the view of ordinary people through the medium of painted artwork so realistic, "it takes your breath away."

"The premise of the series was to investigate what it would be like to

be a real person experiencing the Marvel Universe, as opposed to the normal Marvel reader's expectation — knowing intimate details of the heroes' private lives, their innermost thoughts, their hopes and dreams," writer Busiek related. "If you were actually in the Marvel Universe, it would be a very, very different experience. They'd be celebrities; they'd be kind of scary. And normal life would be disrupted on a constant basis by the kind of things that go on."

to observe their evolution over the course of an ordinary man's lifespan.

"At first, Phil thinks this is major upheaval that will go away and [things will] go back to normal," Busiek said. "He wants to put off the wedding until these dangerous freaks are gone. Then it becomes clear they are not going to go away, and they may not be as dangerous as people think they are. The issue culminates with the Sub-Mariner's second major attack on the surface world, a story never retold in any

around major events of Marvel Universe history. Each issue would represent 26-27 months of Marvel continuity; prior to plotting each issue, Busiek would read more than 100 comic books in whatever format he could get his hands on — microfiche, **MARVEL MASTERWORKS** editions, and original comics. This meticulous research allowed him to tie legendary events together into a cohesive storyline. "Marcus every now and then would bug me for the next plot," he recalled, "and I had to

On the eve of World War II, Phil Shelton is engaged to marry his childhood sweetheart, but life is about to take an unexpected and unsettling turn. As **MARVELS #1** progresses, he attends the press conference where Professor Horton unveils the Human Torch, and experiences the Sub-Mariner's first rampage in New York. Phil's camera and emotions provide the lens through which the reader sees the

super heroes' arrival and continue modern Marvel comic. He floods Manhattan and battles the Torch, and Phil witnesses all of that."

In the second issue, events jump forward in time to the Silver Age, when the Avengers and X-Men have just arrived on the scene and Reed Richards and Sue Storm announce their engagement. Their wedding day is revealed to be the same day the Sentinels first came to New York

to stalk the X-Men. It was decided early on to build all of the action say, 'look, I've got 120 comics to read and take notes on before I can figure out what the plot is, because I can't make anything up.'"

MARVELS #3 introduces the Silver Surfer and Galactus, and **#4** opens up with the Kree-Skrull War and culminates with the death of Gwen Stacy.

Imagine if you were living in Manhattan, Busiek described, and "one day, without any warning, the sky turned to fire, turned to stone, then the Silver Surfer appeared through the rock, a spaceship came down, and Galactus came out and said, 'I'm going to chomp up the Earth, you're going to be lunch.' The Fantastic Four attacks him, he beats them, he starts building machines, and nothing happens for a while.

In contrast, the death of Gwen Stacy. . .would be just another human death in the city.

The title of this particular issue is 'Judgement Day' because most people would be convinced this is the end of the world. This is how we've been told it's going to happen. It's a really apocalyptic event."

The storyline is complicated by the fact that so much super heroic action takes place off-Earth. "We don't see the Human Torch going to Galactus's spaceship to get the ultimate nullifier from Galactus's bedside table," Busiek said. "What we get to see is the Fantastic Four and the Silver Surfer fighting Galactus and losing, and people going to church, getting drunk, huddling with their families, and waiting for the world to end. Then something they don't understand happens — Mr. Fantastic holds something up in front of Galactus's face, and Galactus goes 'Umphf' and leaves. The Fantastic Four have averted the end of the world and everybody knows it. But the next day J. Jonah Jameson and the *Daily Bugle* are calling it a hoax, and people are back to being scared of the heroes."

In contrast, the death of Gwen Stacy — a major event from Spider-Man's perspective — would be just another human death in the city. "Inside the Marvel Universe, she is just a college student. There is nothing special about her, except she's the daughter of a late city police captain and is killed when a super hero fights a super villain," he noted.

McLaurin stressed again that the biggest marvel of *MARVELS* is Ross's amazing artwork. Ironically, horror maestro Clive Barker brought Ross to McLaurin's attention as an artist for **CLIVE BARKER'S HELLRAISER**. Ross painted a story for **HELLRAISER #18**, but one glance at the artist's samples — a retelling of the Human Torch's origin and eight full-color character paintings — immediately convinced McLaurin that Ross's greatest potential was as the creator of a truly unique super hero storyline.

"These were some really amazing shots that made the characters leap off the page," McLaurin recalled. "Alex made them really real in a way that even a movie can't do. He's taken it to a reality that's beyond a made-up or latex reality. When you see the Thing, you really feel his skin is made out of [rocks], not that he's in a costume.

"It was, like, of course we're going to use this guy."

"When I approach a character such as the Thing, I think about how he might look if a movie studio had a perfect budget," Ross said. "You can imagine a character colored orange in comics, but if he was supposed to be made out of rocks, he wouldn't be orange. Maybe the next major color you could use to simplify him would be orange, but in reality he would have a dirty, sandy, very gritty color."

He added that he tried to make the Thing bear a facial resemblance to Jack Kirby. "I still have to point it out to people," he said, "but I spent a lot of time trying to get that. Either way, it comes across as very realistic because the eyes are very fleshed out, and [the Thing] looks like a person could have distorted to this point, as opposed to someone in a big rubber suit." The Jack Kirby link only really shows in the original sketch, he lamented, but he hopes to do a tighter character shot later in the series.

For Ross, it started not with the Thing, but with the Human Torch and, of course, a touch of nostalgia.

Attending the American Academy of Art in Chicago, he became fascinated with using human models

and photos to create the most realistic images possible. Upon graduation, the young artist (now 23) landed a job designing storyboards for a Chicago advertising agency, which he said provided excellent practice for doing comics. Meanwhile, he started pursuing jobs in the comics field and landed a gig for *Terminator: The Burning Earth* (**NOW** Comics).

While painting the wraparound cover for the paperback edition, featuring the skeletal Terminator walking through fire, he was intrigued by the concept of painting a man on fire. He decided to try the same pose , substituting the Human Torch. The result — part of the portfolio submitted to McLaurin — became the cover of **MARVELS #1**.

"I was inspired to do it because I could picture this way to illustrate the Human Torch to really make it look like a painting of someone on fire, as opposed to somebody who's composed of a lot of lines," Ross said. "Then I wanted to try every character whom I thought had a truly original concept, and so I worked over to Sub-Mariner, the first other truly original Marvel, and did a number of other single character illustrations — Black Panther, Doctor Doom, The Thing, Spider-Man and Gwen Stacy, and so forth."

Ross's Terminator work also attracted the attention of Kurt Busiek, who tracked down Ross's phone number and hired him to do a job for **OPEN SPACE**, a Marvel anthology project he was editing. Ross turned in the piece, but the series unfortunately was canceled and the tale never was printed.

Meanwhile, Busiek suggested developing a series concept that would take full advantage of Ross's unique style. "Alex wanted to do some sort of series that involved all of his favorite Marvel characters," Busiek said, and they threw out a number of unsatisfactory ideas before McLaurin got involved and hit on the right one. "One idea was about a futuristic weapon thrown back into the '40s which the Human Torch fights, then Sub-Mariner fights, then Captain America fights, and over the course of several issues it evolves into one big powerful super villain. It sounds like a bad annual crossover."

Then Busiek had an epiphany — why not use Ross's art to show readers super heroes from the "outside."

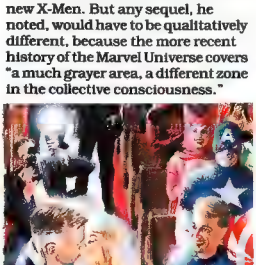
"One of the things I always focus on in my writing is to see events from a realistic perspective," he said, citing a story he wrote for **MARVEL SUPER HEROES** about a guy who worked at Stark Enterprises and kept applying for the job of Iron Man. "Thus, I made my lead character, Phil Shelton, a photo journalist, also because it provided a reason for him to be there at the major events of the Marvel Universe.

He elaborated, "Normally a project is started by one freelancer and the rest of the creators are brought in just to flesh out this person's idea, but in this case Alex had the art but not the concept. He didn't know what his series would be about, but he wanted to call it 'Marvel.' I added the 's' to it and made it **MARVELS**, and that's where the concept clicked."

McLaurin allowed Ross three months to paint each issue. Why such indulgence? He stressed, "We never want to get into a situation where we have to rush Alex, because the book is so much about the art." As it is, plans call for a one month gap between the third issue and the fourth should Ross need the time to complete the project to everyone's satisfaction.

The difference between **MARVELS** and other painted books is that most painted books are about "style," he added. "Alex's style is a style of realism — a style that makes characters feel real, not stylized."

As for **MARVELS 2**, McLaurin stressed plans were in the works to create a similar perspective on newer, darker characters such as Ghost Rider, the Punisher, and the new X-Men. But any sequel, he noted, would have to be qualitatively different, because the more recent history of the Marvel Universe covers "a much grayer area, a different zone in the collective consciousness."



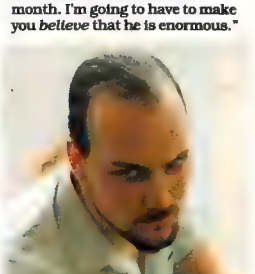
Ross, however, said he won't be involved, because he wants to move on to exciting but different projects. What they will be, he isn't sure, but for now he is content working on **MARVELS #3** and **#4**. "Whenever I get to draw a new character I haven't had a chance to draw yet, it's a real charge for me," he noted. "I'm looking forward to drawing the next wave of Avengers that involves the Vision. And since we really haven't had any shots of Spider-Man, I'm looking forward to going really crazy with him in the fourth issue."

As for the Green Goblin?

"Not hard. No, that's a simple one."

And how to draw Galactus and make him real?

"I haven't figured that out yet," Ross admitted with a chuckle. "That's what I have to do this month. I'm going to have to make you *believe* that he is enormous."



Alex Ross

Three other painted books will follow **MARVELS** off the launchpad next year. Originally scheduled to coincide with the 30th anniversary of Marvel's legendary "split books," these all-new special one-shots of **TALES TO ASTONISH**, **TALES OF SUSPENSE**, and **STRANGE TALES** will appear in 1994.

Each storyline will be set in present-day Marvel continuity and feature the Incredible Hulk, Hank Pym, and the Wasp by Peter David and John Estes (**TALES TO ASTONISH**), Captain America and Iron Man by James Robinson and Colin MacNeil (**TALES OF SUSPENSE**), and Doctor Strange, the Human Torch, and the Thing by Kurt Busiek and Ray Lago (**STRANGE TALES**).

"It's been a while since we've seen a painted super hero project," said Editor Fabian Nicieza. "We've had painted Epic projects, but not super hero projects, so I don't mind if **MARVELS** comes out first, because I'm trying to appeal to the same readership, and at the same time pave the way for younger people to appreciate that kind of work."

Nicieza stressed that each will have its own unique look. "John Estes does particularly strong watercolors, MacNeil does black and white line work with a lot of fully painted color, and Lago's style is lush, meticulous, and photorealistic.

"I'm really excited about the return of the painted super hero book," he added. "I want to give readers, young and old, something *different*."

– *Anya Martin*

In the beginning. . .

It all began with a man on fire. For Marvel's series, it's the story of a universe. For me, it's the story of my vision for that universe. My first job in the business was years ago on *Terminator: The Burning Earth*. I was working on a cover illustration — a shot of a Terminator skeleton walking through a wall of flame. The image got me thinking that I could depict the original Human Torch in the same realistic style, as a *man* on fire.

My original concept was a book that would pay homage to **MARVEL COMICS #1** by including stories with its stars, the Torch and the Sub-Mariner. I took a break from pursuing regular comics work to produce a package I felt would really represent my best efforts and tell a story I really wanted to tell — a 12-page retelling of the Torch's origin, fully illustrated and lettered. I painted a cover for my story (similar to the cover of **MARVELS #1**), gave it dialog, and added a few sketches of other Marvel characters.

The first person I showed it to was Kurt Busiek, with whom I'd worked on **OPEN SPACE**, and someone I thought would be interested in my idea for a short story anthology starring Marvel heroes and featuring painted artwork.

As Kurt and I discussed the idea, my samples were being passed around to various publishers, and strictly by chance got into the hands of Editor Marc McLaurin. Marc asked for a formal proposal, and between Kurt's writing and my kibitzing, the concept began to evolve. The anthology of unrelated stories became a single storyline focusing on the point of view of a common man who was around from the dawn of the super-heroes. What we felt made it unique was that our main character would see these heroes from the *outside*, giving us a real perspective on how people would feel if they co-existed with creatures of this magnitude.

The story that follows (this issue and for the next three months) was done in 1990 and is quite different from the direction of **MARVELS**. Unlike the upcoming series, the point of view here is strictly that of the Torch. I did the artwork based on my original script and asked a writer friend, Steve Darnall, to give me *his* version. Later, I grafted the two together, taking what I thought was the best of each.

To paraphrase Neil Innes, I've suffered for my art. Now it's your turn.

Alex Ross

"IT IS WITH CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY THAT I REMEMBER THE ORIGINAL ERA OF MY BEING...
MARY SHELLEY
FRANKENSTEIN

MORRISON
HENRY A. THOMAS HORTON
QUITE POSSIBLY THE GREATEST
SCIENTIST OF HIS TIME
HENRY A. MAYCASTER

X-PRESS YOURSELF!

Send your letters to: MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. Attention, correspondents: All letters to be considered for publication must include your complete name and address, though we will gladly withhold that info on request!

This month's loquacious letter column title comes to us from Christine Guitarese of Marshfield, MA. Thanks a lot, Christine! We hope everyone else will take your hint and X-press themselves through nifty titles that we can use to head this column in future months. Don't be shy, folks! Send your ideas on in. If we X-tract one for publication, we'll even X-press a little gratitude by printing your name in this very space. Pretty X-traordinary, huh?

In fact, in honor of our X-cellent title, let's kick things off with an issue of X-ceeding importance. . .

Dear big boss man,

Could you please come out with action figures of the Beast, Psylocke, Jean Grey, Rogue, Professor X, Jubilee, and the Sentinels? Thanks! I am going to tell you what I collect from Marvel Comics: cards, comics, and toys.

Bakari Kamau
2640 Locust St.
Denver, CO 80207

Photo by Joe Caponiaazzi

Your wish is our command, Bakari! Well, almost, anyway.

According to Consumer Products ace Alan Gordon, there are indeed plans in the works for an action figure of Professor X in 1993, with the Beast and the Sentinels following in 1994. Right now, there aren't any concrete plans for the rest of the characters you mentioned, but if the current batch is successful, we wouldn't rule them out. At this rate, you could fulfill Magneto's greatest dream — to have all of the X-Men right in the palm of your hand!

Dear **MARVEL AGE**,

Yesterday, my parents asked what we should do to celebrate my grandmother's seventy-fifth birthday. I thought maybe we should flatten her and then make her a special glow-in-the-dark, silver embossed foil, 3-D hologram and holografix picture so that we could preserve her and, as time passes by, her value could increase. And maybe we could also publish a special trading card set commemorating this special date.

By the way, do you think I should stop reading Marvel Comics before I become obsessed?

Hector M. Padilla
Recreo 103-6 Col. Del Valle
C.P. 03100
Mexico City, Mexico

***Before* you become obsessed, Hector. . .?**

Now it's time to check in with our own pet obsession, the LETTER OF THE MONTH! As always, we've donned our archaeologists' hats and probed deep into our voluminous mail sacks to find a priceless treasure: a letter that we think will be of particular interest to Marvelites. Then, as with all historical treasures, we've enshrined it in a place of honor. It touches on a topic of particular interest to fans who follow the work of specific writers and artists and all the budding comics professionals out there. . .

Hello, you Marvel guys,

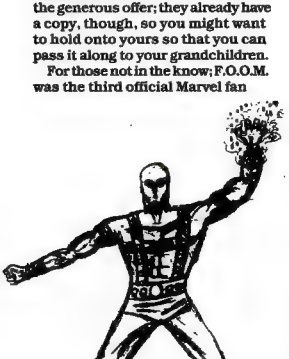
I am not sure where to address this, but it concerns Fabian Nicieza. I recall reading an interview with Mr. Nicieza, either in one of the books he writes or in one of the price guides in which he mentions **F.O.O.M.** It so happens I have a copy of **F.O.O.M. MAGAZINE #2** (Summer, 1973); in it is Mariano Nicieza, who had entered a contest with a hero named Novaton. This issue also contains The Wolverine by Andy Olsen, Quasar by Brian Swift, and possibly the forerunner of U.S.Agent, Captain U.S.A. by Martin Fritch.

I am not sure if Mr. Nicieza wanted this book or if he wished it forgotten, but if he would like it for personal memorabilia, perhaps Nomad could visit Traverse City, Michigan and it will be his for the asking. (Only kidding. If Mr. Nicieza would like to have this issue, where can I forward it?)

Thomas D. Ockert
827 Union St.
Traverse City, MI 49684

Thomas, what you have there is not an early effort by scripter Fabian Nicieza, but the work of his brother Mariano, who currently works in the promotions department here at Mighty Marvel. They say "thanks" for the generous offer; they already have a copy, though, so you might want to hold onto yours so that you can pass it along to your grandchildren.

For those not in the know; F.O.O.M. was the third official Marvel fan club (preceded by the Merry Marvel Marching Society and Marvelmania), a tradition that lives on to this day in the form of the Wild Agents of Marvel. The initials F.O.O.M. stood for "Friends of Ol' Marvel," and the club lasted for several years, back in the 1970s.



NOVATON
by Mariano Nicieza

Membership came complete with a subscription to the official F.O.O.M. magazine, which carried behind-the-scenes features and previews of upcoming comic books, much as MARVEL AGE does today. Among those lucky readers whose artwork graced its pages were the likes of Rick Hoberg, Larry Mahlstedt, and Doug Hazlewood, all of whom would later become successful comics professionals. Looking at the early fan art by today's established pros can be a whole lot of fun, and it serves as a good example for today's aspiring artists and writers.

And speaking of comics professionals, both established and aspiring. . .

Dear **MARVEL AGE**,

My question doesn't have to deal with comics. It's along the lines of the artists who draw them. I was wondering if you could set me up as a pen pal with one of the artists at Marvel.

"Why," you say? Because I love to draw comics and I hope to someday work at Marvel. So if you could do this for me, I really will appreciate it.

Thanks a mil.

Travis Campbell
9169 St. Peter's Church
Louisville, OH 44641

Dear Sirs,

My name is George Sikes and I like all your comics, but the one I completely like is **WOLVERINE**. I'd be very thankful if you gave me the address of the person who writes **WOLVERINE**.

Thank you very much.

George Sikes
736 E. 10th St.
Brooklyn, NY 11230

Actually, Travis and George, you already know an address where you can write to all of your favorite Marvel artists and writers. You can address your letter to "(writer/artist's name), c/o Marvel Comics, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016 and we'll forward the letter along to him/her.

We can't guarantee that they'll be able to write back. Meeting monthly deadlines requires a great deal of work in a fairly short period of time. As a result, individual writers and artists may not be able to answer all of their mail personally (just as the pressures of publishing a monthly magazine mean that we can't respond personally to every letter that comes to MARVEL AGE). But one thing's for sure: You won't get any responses if you don't try.

Dear Marvel men and women,

I am afraid a situation has developed about which I can no longer keep silent.

I understand when your annuals ship late because you have those rookie trading cards.

I also understand when your gimmick-cover anniversary issues ship late.

What I do not understand is why a regular issue of your average, run-of-the-mill titles should be late!

Now, don't get offended and tell me Marvel doesn't produce average, run-of-the-mill titles. I have been collecting your titles for over two decades, and I know the quality workmanship your company produces. That's why I am so amazed at this latest turn of events. This is something I would expect from other companies and not from the leader in the industry.

Recent issues of **THE AVENGERS** were one to two weeks late, while **THE FANTASTIC FOUR** (your flagship title) and **THE NEW WARRIORS** were a month and a half late.

Maybe your company has expanded too much and too fast. I would rather have you cut back and produce quality books on time than have to guess when my favorite titles are coming

out! I can't even depend on the recently-returned Marvel Checklist, which I'm happy to see back.

Please tell me there's a reason for the late shipping and, more importantly, that it's only a temporary situation which is going to be resolved very soon!

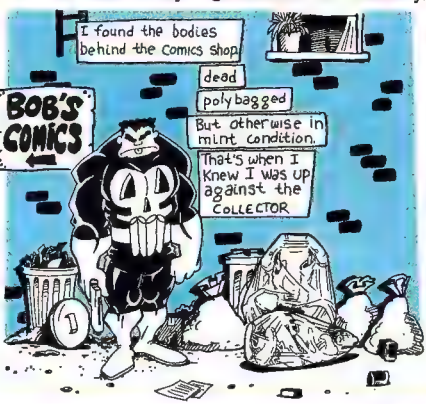
Rob "The Bob" Rainville
58 Williams St.
Woonsocket, RI 02895

We're sorry about the occasional delays, Rob, although FANTASTIC FOUR Editor Ralph Macchio assures us that the book has never been as much as a month and a half late. If it arrived at your store that late, the problem arose sometime after the issue went to the printer.

Still, delays do happen. Since Ralph also edits THE AVENGERS, one of the other series you mentioned, we asked him for the reasons. He explained that, with so many people involved in the production of an issue — the writer, penciler, inker, letterer, and colorist — unforeseen circumstances can creep into the chain at any point and hold up the whole process. And that's not even counting the possibility of delays in production, printing, or distribution.

Still, let's bear in mind that, despite all the opportunities for delays and the fast pace of producing a monthly comic book, the vast majority of comic books are published on schedule. And we'll keep working on the problem until all of them appear on schedule, all of the time.

In keeping with that theme, we'd better stick to our own schedule and pick up a top secret communiqué from one of our favorite Wild Agents of Marvel in our monthly. . .


I found the bodies behind the Comics shop
dead
poly bagged
But otherwise in mint condition.
That's when I knew I was up against the COLLECTOR
BOB'S COMICS

Remember: If you want to jam with the Jammers, all you have to do is send us a letter on official WAM stationery or include your WAM I.D. number along with your letter. You don't even need any special safety equipment.

Dear WAM Jam,

I was hoping to start a fan club for two of your main series, **GHOST RIDER** and the X-Family books, but I found that I didn't know how to reach out to other readers or go about starting a fan club. So if you have any information regarding either, I will be eagerly awaiting your reply.

Well let me know something.

Tony Olivier
Agent #09759
150 Cleveland St.
Houma, LA 70363-6718

Okay, Tony, we'll let you know something.

We have a couple of suggestions for getting your club under way. One might be to start on a local level, with various friends and/or by posting flyers around your neighborhood (near newsstands and comics shops) to attract fellow enthusiasts. Or you could reach out to a broader audience by placing a classified ad in publications such as the weekly *Comics Buyer's Guide*. Finally, we wouldn't be surprised if some potential members contact you after seeing your letter here.

Just be sure that, once your club goes international, you remember you're already a member of another club. After all, everyone knows that Agents never retire. . .alive.

See ya next month.

checklist

OCTOBER SPOTLIGHT

AVENGERS MASTERWORKS 12.95
AVENGERS #1-5 in softcover

CAPTAIN AMERICA: DEATHLOK LIVES 4.95
Collecting CAPTAIN AMERICA #286-288

DAREDEVIL: THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR #3 (of 5) 2.95
Matt's first meeting with Elektra

MIDNIGHT SONS MAGAZINE 3.95
Exploring Marvel's dark side

MARVEL MASTERWORKS #25 34.95
Re-presents FANTASTIC FOUR #41-50

WOLVERINE: GLOBAL JEOPARDY 2.95
By Peter David and Richard Howell

MATCHES OF THE MONTH

DARKHAWK #34 1.25
Darkhawk vs. Mako

DIE-CUT #2 (of 4) 1.75
Die-Cut vs. X-Beast

EXCALIBUR #72 1.75
Excalibur vs. Ferris

FANTASTIC FOUR UNLIMITED #4 3.95
Thing vs. Hulk

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #43 1.25
The Guardians vs. the 31st Century Inhumans

INCREDIBLE HULK #412 1.25
She-Hulk and Hulk vs. the Hi-Beast

IRON MAN #299 1.25
Iron Man vs. Ultimo

LETHAL FOES OF SPIDER-MAN #4 (of 4) 1.75
Spidey vs. Doc Ock, the Vulture, the Rhino and more

METEOR MAN #5 (of 6) 1.25
Meteor Man vs. Exoset & Warhammer

NAMOR #45 1.25
Namor vs. Attuma vs. Sunfire

PUNISHER WAR ZONE #22 1.75
The Punisher vs. DX

THOR CORPS #4 (of 4) 1.75
The Thor Corps vs. Demonstaff

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #107 1.25
Spidey vs. Sandstorm, Sandman and Quicksand

WOLVERINE & PUNISHER: DAMAGING EVIDENCE #3 (of 3) 2.00
Wolverine vs. the Punisher

X-MEN 2099 #3 1.25
X-Men 2099 vs. the Ratpack

PREMIERES

BLAZE #1 (of 4) 1.75
Blaze's family is kidnapped.

BOOK OF THE DEAD #1 (of 4) 1.75
Classic tales of Man-Thing and Frankenstein's monster

CLIVE BARKER'S THE HARROWERS #1 (of 4) 2.95
Leviathan's worst nightmare

CLIVE BARKER'S PINHEAD #1 2.95
Pinhead travels through time to stop a mysterious and deadly foe. Glow in the dark cover

CURSE OF THE WEIRD #1 (of 4) 1.25
Pre-comics code classics

DEATH METAL VS. GENETIX #1 2.95

First Week

AVENGERS WEST COAST #101 1.25

BIKER MICE FROM MARS #2 1.50
Dr. Karbuncle unveils X-Terminator.

CABLE #6 2.00

CAPTAIN AMERICA #422 1.25
Cap's new Headquarters.

CHILDREN OF THE VOYAGER #4 (of 4) 1.95
Sam fights for his immortal soul.

CLIVE BARKER'S PINHEAD #1 2.95

DANCES WITH DEMONS #4 1.95
James Owl confronts the Manitou.

DAREDEVIL #323 1.25
"Fall From Grace" part 4.

DARK GUARD #3 1.75
Death's Head & Motormouth try to rescue Killpower.

DARKHAWK #34 1.25

DEATH DUTY #1 2.25

DIE CUT #2 (of 4) 1.75

GROO THE WANDERER #107 2.25

GUN RUNNER #3 (of 6) 1.75

MARVEL MASTERWORKS #25 34.95

MIDNIGHT SONS MAGAZINE 3.95

MONSTER MENACE #1 (of 4) 1.25

MOTORMOUTH & KILLPOWER #2 (of 4) 1.75

NAMOR #45 1.25

NIGHTSTALKERS #14 1.75

NOMAD #20 1.75

ORIGINAL GHOST RIDER #18 1.75
Ghostie vs. the Incredible Hulk.

PUNISHER ARMORY #6 2.00

REN & STIMPY #13 1.75
Stimpy is possessed by a demon.

SACHS & VIOLENS #2 (of 4) 2.25
The Model Killer goes after J.J.

SAINT SINNER #3 1.75

SHE-HULK #58 1.75
Pursued by Tommy the Intern

SPIDER-MAN 2099 #14 1.25

SPIDER-MAN CLASSIC #9 1.25

THOR CORPS #4 (of 4) 1.75

THUNDERSTRIKE #3 1.25
Eric investigates the murder of his son's teacher.

UNCANNY X-MEN #307 1.25

WARLOCK CHRONICLES #6 2.00

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #107 1.25

WOLVERINE: GLOBAL JEOPARDY 2.95

GAMBIT #1 (of 4) 2.50
By Howard Mackie and Lee Weeks, with gold foil-embossed cover

HELLHOUND #1 (of 4) 2.25
A blues musician sells his soul.

KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF JUSTICE #1 (of 3) 1.25
The new hit animated series

MONSTER MENACE #1 (of 4) 1.25
Classic 1950's monstrosities

MORT THE DEAD TEENAGER #1 (of 4) 1.75
The problems of school, parents and being dead

TIMESTRYKE #1 (of 4) 2.95
With a red foil cover

X-MEN VS. DRACULA #1 1.75
The classic battle from X-MEN ANNUAL #8.

Second Week

ALPHA FLIGHT #127 1.75

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #384 1.25
Spidey on trial for Venom's crimes

BARBIE #36 1.25

CLIVE BARKER'S THE HARROWERS #1 2.95

CURSE OF THE WEIRD #1 (of 4) 1.25

DARKHOLD #15 1.75

GHOST RIDER #44 1.75

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY #43 1.25

HYPERKIND #4 1.75

KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF JUSTICE #1 (of 3) 1.25

LETHAL FOES OF SPIDER-MAN #4 (of 4) 1.75

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #143 1.75

NIGHT THRASHER #5 1.75
A Taylor Foundation plane is skyjacked.

PSYCHONAUTS #3 (of 4) 4.95
Can the planet Earth ever be populated again?

PUNISHER WAR ZONE #22 1.75

QUASAR #53 1.25

RAVAGE 2099 #13 1.25
Ravage learns the secret of the floating city.

ROIDRAGE #1 (of 4) 2.25

SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #216 2.25
"The Vengeance of Nitocris."

SECRET DEFENDERS #10 1.75
War Machine & Thunderstrike battle Nebula to save the Silver Surfer.

SILVER SABLE #19 1.25

SLEEPWALKER #31 1.25
Rick Sheridan returns from the dead.

SPIDER-WOMAN #2 (of 4) 1.75
S.W.'s true origin

TERRARISTS #2 (of 4) 2.50
The Terrarists battle corporate soldiers. With bound-in trading card.

WILD THING #9 1.75
Rikki fights her way through a virtual reality jungle.

WOLVERINE #76 1.75

WONDER MAN #28 1.25
Wendy journeys to Asgard.

X-FACTOR #97 1.25
The mystery behind X-Factor's greatest enemy begins to unravel.

X-MEN ADVENTURES #14 1.25
The conclusion to, "Days of Future Past."

GUEST APPEARANCES

CABLE #6 2.00
Cyclops, Jean Grey & Professor X

CYBERSPACE 3000 #6 1.75
Adam Warlock

DAREDEVIL #323 1.25
Venom

IMMORTALIS #4 (of 4) 1.95
Dr. Strange

MOTORMOUTH & KILLPOWER #2 (of 4) 1.75
Death's Head II

NEW WARRIORS #42 1.25
Firelord & Atrwalker

NOMAD #20 1.75
The Six Pack

FLASMER #2 (of 4) 1.75
Captain Britain

QUASAR #53 1.25
Warlock

SILVER SABLE #19 1.25
Venom

SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #207 1.25
Ghost Rider

SPIDER-MAN #41 1.75
Iron Fist

SUPER SOLDIERS #9 1.75
The Punisher

WOLVERINE #76 1.75
Alpha Flight

Third Week

AVENGERS #369 2.95

AVENGERS MASTERWORKS 12.95

BLAZE #1 (of 4) 1.75

BLOODRUSH #1 (of 4) 2.25

BRATS BIZARRE #2 (of 4) 2.50
Another Brat loses his life.
With bound-in trading card.

CHILLER #2 (of 2) 7.95

CONAN #275 2.50
Finale.

CONAN SAGA #81 2.25
Conan fights wizards, goblins and soldiers to save a maiden.

CYBERSPACE 3000 #6 1.75

DARK ANGEL #17 1.75
DA faces a new supergroup—the Psycho-Warriors.

DEATH^3 #4 (of 4) 1.75
Charnel tries to take over the world.

DEATH METAL VS. GENETIX #1 2.95

DIE CUT VS. G-FORCE #2 (of 2) 2.75
Die-Cut & G-Force must stop the deadly Cyberdrones.

DOCTOR WHO #203 4.95
Trapped in an alternate time line.

DOOM 2099 #12 1.25
Doom travels to Wakanda to stop a mad cyborg.

DRAGON LINES: THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR #2 (of 2) 2.25
The Monkey King and the Spirit Boxer battle for Tao's soul.

ECTOKID #4 1.75
Dex discovers he has a strange new power.

EXCALIBUR #72 1.75

FANTASTIC FOUR UNLIMITED #4 3.95

GAMBIT #1 (of 4) 2.50

GENE DOGS #3 (of 4) 1.75
The Gene Dogs storm Otomo's Siberian base.

G.I. JOE #143 1.25
The return of Roadblock.

HELLHOUND #1 (of 4) 2.25

INCREDIBLE HULK #412 1.25

MARVEL AGE #131 1.00
Kuberta, Excalibur and Deathlok

MARVEL TALES #280 1.25
The Avengers guest-star.

MORBIUS #16 1.75

MORBIUS REVISITED #5 (of 5) 1.95

MORT THE DEAD TEENAGER #1 (of 4) 1.75

PINHEAD/MARSHAL LAW: LAW IN HELL #2 (of 2) 2.95

PUNISHER #85 1.25
The prequel to "Suicide Run"

SPIDER-MAN #41 1.75

SUPER SOLDIERS #9 1.75

TIMESTRYKE #1 (of 4) 2.95

TRANSFORMERS: GENERATION 2 #2 1.75
One of the Transformers dies.

WARLOCK & THE INFINITY WATCH #23 1.75

WHAT IF #56 1.25
"What if the Avengers Lost Operation: Galactic Storm?" part 2.

WOLVERINE & THE PUNISHER: DAMAGING EVIDENCE #3 (of 3) 2.00

X-MEN #27 1.25
Iceman and the Beast seek the source of the Legacy Virus.

X-MEN 2099 #3 1.25

X-MEN VS. DRACULA #1 1.75

Fourth Week

AVENGERS: TERMINATRIX OBJECTIVE #4 (of 4) 1.25
Terminatrix, Revelation and the Avengers take on Alioth.

BARBIE FASHION #36 1.25

BLACK AXE #9 1.75
BA finds his computer infected with a deadly virus.

Fourth Week

BOOK OF THE DEAD #1 (of 4) 1.75

CAPTAIN AMERICA: DEATHLOK LIVES 4.95

DAREDEVIL: THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR #3 (of 5) 2.95
With foil-etched cover.

DEATH'S HEAD II #13 1.95
Arrested while searching for Tuck.

DEATHLOK #30 1.75
Deathlok faces the original Deathlok.

DOCTOR WHO CLASSIC COMICS #12 4.95

DR. STRANGE #60 1.75

FANTASTIC FOUR #383 1.25
The F.F. stand trial for crimes against the Skrulls.

GENETIX #3 (of 6) 1.75
The team confronts Tektos, an all-new supergroup.

GHOST RIDER & BLAZE: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #17 1.75

HELLSTORM #9 2.00
"Mountain of Judgement" conclusion.

HOKUM & HEX #4 1.75
Leading up to next month's HYPERKIND crossover.

IMMORTALIS #4 (of 4) 1.95

THE INCOMPLETE DEATH'S HEAD #12 (of 12) 2.50

IRON MAN #299 1.25

KILLPOWER: THE EARLY YEARS #4 (of 4) 1.75
Death in an alternate future.

LAW DOG #8 1.95

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #144 1.75

MARVEL SPOTLIGHT Free
Marvel's November books.

METEOR MAN #5 (of 6) 1.25

MOON KNIGHT #57 1.75
The deadly Bloodline.

NEW WARRIORS #42 1.25

PLASMER #2 (of 4) 1.95

PUNISHER 2099 #11 1.25

SILVER SURFER #87 1.25
SPECTACULAR

SPIDER-MAN #207 1.25
STRANGE COMBAT TALES #3 (of 4) 2.50
WWII fighter pilots battle flying dragons.

THOR #469 1.25

VENOM: THE MADNESS #2 (of 3) 2.95
Venom faces Juggernaut and Black Tom Cassidy.

WAR MAN #2 (of 2) 2.50
Griffin is chased by mercenaries
Includes bound-in trading card.

WILLIAM SHATNER'S TEK WORLD #16 1.75
"Tek Lords" part 3 of 5.

X-FORCE #29 1.25

X-MEN CLASSIC #90 1.75
Storm loses her powers in this 48-page special.

X-MEN UNLIMITED #3
The X-Men gain a new member.

HEAVY HITTERS II
With bound-in trading card and contest entry rules

SACHS & VIOLENS #2 (of 4) 2.25
The Model Killer goes after J.J.

TERRARISTS #2 (of 4) 2.50
The Terrarists battle corporate soldiers.

BRATS BIZARRE #2 (of 4) 2.50
Another Brat loses his life.

DRAGON LINES: THE WAY OF THE WARRIOR #2 (of 2) 2.25
The Monkey King and the Spirit Boxer battle for Tao's soul.

LAW DOG #8 1.95

WAR MAN #2 (of 2) 2.50
Griffin is chased by mercenaries.

CROSSOVERS

Blood and Thunder

SILVER SURFER #87 1.25
Part 6 of 13: The Valkyrie's true identity.

THOR #469 1.25
Part 5 of 13: Thor steals Drax's power gem.

WARLOCK & THE INFINITY WATCH #23 1.75
Part 4 of 13: Warlock & the Silver Surfer battle Thor.

WARLOCK CHRONICLES #6 2.00
Part 3 of 13: Adam prepares to battle Thor.

X-Men/Avengers: Bloodties

AVENGERS
WEST COAST #101 1.25
Part 3 of 5: To Genosha!

UNCANNY X-MEN #307 1.25
Part 4 of 5: Gambit and Storm infiltrate Genoshan security.

AVENGERS #369 2.95
Part 5 of 5: Conclusion.

Red Mist 2020 *(With trading card sheets)*

DEATH DUTY #1 2.25
Part 1 of 6: A deadly mutant virus.

'ROIDRAGE #1 (of 4) 2.25
Part 2 of 6: The red mist virus infects super soldiers.

BLOODRUSH #1 (of 4) 2.25
Part 3 of 6: Private eye Jake Keller learns of the virus.

Siege of Darkness *(With neon ink covers)*

NIGHTSTALKERS #14 1.75
Part 1 of 17: A mysterious cloud over Cypress Hills Cemetary

GHOST RIDER #44 1.75
Part 2 of 17: Zarathos and Lilith attack the Midnight Sons

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #143 1.75
Part 3 of 17: G.R. & Blaze discover a traitor.

DARKHOLD #15 1.75
Part 4 of 17: Ghost Rider tries to warn group 2 of the traitor.

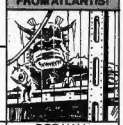
MORBIUS #16 1.75
Part 5 of 17: Under Lilith's spell.

MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS #144 1.75
Part 6 of 17: Ghost Rider battles the traitor.

DR. STRANGE #60 1.75
Part 7 of 17: Strange's mansion—destroyed

GHOST RIDER & BLAZE: SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE #17 1.75
Part 8 of 17: Blaze & Ghost Rider team up with Vengeance.

FIN FANG FOOM vs. IT THE LIVING COLOSSUS!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					HAPPY BIRTHDAY DON DALEY 1	TITAN! THE AMPHIBIAN FROM ATLANTIS! 
JOEY CAVALIERI 3	MARCUS McLAURIN LAWRENCE TUMMINELLO 4	5	6	ARIANE LENSHOEK PINHEIRO STEPHEN BEHLING HOWARD CHAYKIN 7	MIKE LACKEY 8	
GROOT! THE MONSTER FROM PLANET X! 	TONY MATIAS PATRICIA DAZZO 11 COLUMBUS DAY	SPORR! THE THING THAT WOULD NOT DIE! 	RITA ADELSTEIN 13	14	15	BOB HALL JOE SINNOT THOMAS VELAZQUEZ JACQUIE GREEN 16
TERRENCE BROWN KEVIN SOMERS 24 MINDY NEWELL SHEREE LINCOLN 31 HALLOWEEN	DAVID O'BRASKY SANDY PLUNKETT 18 JUNE BRIGMAN 25	LARRY LEIBER JOHN MORELLI GLYNIS OLIVER DEBRA RUTKOWSKI 26	ROGER BONAS GERALDINE PENNESSEY RON GARNEY 20 BERNIE WRIGHTSON ANDREA FRENCH 27	JOE KAUFMAN TOM MORGAN NERISSA TIGLAO JOSEPH CUCOLO 21 CHARLES KEARNEY 28	STEVEN GRANT 22 LEONA BROWN HELEN HRONCIC 29	JERRY KALINOWSKI 23 TYONE DeJESUS 30

MARVEL Age 130

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